

FRENCH POLICY IN WEST AFRICA  
AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

by

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State Dept. review completed

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FRENCH POLICY IN WEST AFRICA  
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INTRODUCTION

In the year 1946 France abolished the French Empire and substituted for it the French Union. The year 1946 is rapidly assuming a place as one of the great dates in French history; it may some day be seen as a great date in the history of human relations in the world, for other events in other empires occurred in or near that year. Not one empire survived the symbolism of 1946 without fundamental changes of long lasting significance.

By authority of the Constitution of the Fourth Republic, 1946, the French Union is composed of The French Republic, the Associated Territories, and Associated States. Contrary to popular notion, The French Republic includes not only France, itself, and the fully enfranchised Departments outside Europe such as those in Algeria, but also The Overseas Territories of The French Republic such as Senegal, Ivory Coast and Chad. The Associated Territories are the Trusteeships, and the Associated States are the States of Indo-China and such others as might care to join the Union.

The year 1946 will long be known for France as the year of the Constitution of the Fourth Republic and of the birth of the French Union. In abolishing the Empire, the Constitution quite logically abolished the concepts that go with Empire: France no longer has "Colonies"; and the practices and systems associated with Colonialism are rapidly being replaced with "Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite" in those former Colonies which are now in the French Union as parts of the French Republic.

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The Constitution is often said to have been inspired by the Conference of Brazzaville of January 1944, during World War II, when the highest leaders and officials, including men of Colonial races, from all/<sup>free</sup>parts of the French Empire gathered to express their hopes on the course of Empire after the war might be ended. (Indo-China was not then free and was not represented; the Ho Chi Country was represented by the Free French).

The deliberations at Brazzaville took place under conditions which made it impossible to implement anything; the recommendations therefore, may be said to have been arrived at in an atmosphere favorable to objectivity. After the end of the war, or "Liberation" as the French call it, the recommendations of Brazzaville were taken to Paris to supply the framework on which the Constitution was built in 1946.

Brazzaville may have been the immediate inspiration for the Constitution, and its recommendations provided the bases for the machinery of the French Union. The finished document, however, contained nothing absolutely new in the way of political, social, or economic principles of policy in the relations of European France with its former Colonies and Colonials. What it did was crystallize into one document, and provide for the categorical implementation of principles first set forth, and even applied in limited ways, a hundred or more years ago. The constitution was quickly followed by a great many decrees, some actually preceding the adoption of the Constitution, which supplied the details/<sup>and</sup> it in motion the intent of those principles. The basic principles thus spelled out for action permitted French social, political and economic policy in part in former colonial areas

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to be revised from a haphazard patchwork into a coherent and logical pattern upon which further and progressive action could take place. The entire specific program appears to be tempered in some respects with the over-riding policy of guidance in effecting economic and health improvements, advancement in education and social consciousness, and application of new civic and legal procedures, but only to the extent of the ability of the local populations to absorb and understand them. In other respects, the application of the principles was immediate.

Although these principles of policy are now Constitutional law, the sudden application of them to millions of people in vast areas, mostly in Black Africa, can only be called a colossal experiment in the political and social treatment of so-called dependent peoples on a basis of equality and full participation. Thus to mention almost any of the phrases such as "self-government", "taxation without representation", "racial discrimination", or exploitation of dependent peoples" as problems, is to repeat questions that have in theory already been dealt with, or that actually do not exist. If all these problems have not as yet been completely solved, the principles for their solution have already been founded in policy.

It is in those former colonies which are now not only members of the French Union, but are so as "Overseas Territories of the French Republic", that this policy is being applied to its fullest extent. Any approach to the problems or situation in French West and Equatorial Africa must, therefore, take this relatively new point of view into consideration. In these areas the question of "self-government" by the "natives" is not an

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issue. There are now legally no "natives as distinguished from"Frenchmen". All are citizens of France; all White or Black may vote in the national elections of the French Republic as well as in the local elections; all are eligible to participate in the Government of the Republic and the Union in any position. Although all the social and economic benefits available to Metropolitan French citizens are not available to the masses in Africa, methods of application are being developed, and individuals obtain them in some places. Old Colonial systems such as compulsory labor and segregation have been abolished.

Lack of clarity prevails as to why laudable reforms appear to be taking place in some parts of the former French Empire and not in others. The distinctions between the five kinds of French territories, or six if we include Metropolitan France, which would explain the apparent discrimination, have not always been clearly defined. The situation is not helped by some French authorities themselves who refer to "The Overseas Territories" and to "overseas territories", and even then are not always too careful about capitalization. When they use the latter term they may include any or all lands under French influence outside of Europe, including full "Departments" of the French Republic such as Martinique or the three departments of Algeria. They may even include in their meaning the French protectorates of Morocco and Tunisia which have not joined the French Union. When the term is used in the first manner, it is supposed to refer to certain former colonies which are now within both the Republic and the Union.

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Thus none of the lands of French North Africa is technically an "Overseas Territory". The Departments of Algeria are parts of the Republic as "Overseas Departments", and Morocco and Tunisia are not included in either the Republic or the Union. Morocco and Tunisia may become Associated States if they wish. The States of Indo-China are Associated States. Trouble, however, started there before the principles of the Constitution could be developed in detail and put into effect.

Although this paper deals specifically only with French West Africa, the policies and implementation described apply equally to all the French "Overseas Territories" on the continent of Africa. These are the eight Territories federated as French West Africa: Senegal, Mauritania, French Guinea, Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Niger, French Sudan, Upper Volta; the four Territories federated as French Equatorial Africa: Chad, Middle Congo, Gaboon and Ubangi-Chari. In addition to these federations is French Somaliland and the Island of Madagascar which is sometimes considered to be a part of Black Africa.\*

Also in Africa are the two "Associated Territories" of the French Union which are subject in many respects to just the same policy and implementation discussed herein. Because they are "Trust Territories" under the supervision of the United Nations they could not be made parts of the French Republic and full French citizenship could not be conferred upon their inhabitants by Constitutional Act. They are: French Togoland and the Cameroons.

\* The remaining Overseas Territories of France are: the French settlements in India, New Caledonia, Comoro, Oceania and St. Pierre and Miquelon.

To understand French Policy and its effect upon French Black Africa, it is necessary to understand the basic principles of the French Constitutional, legal and administrative systems, and their effect upon both the Frenchmen responsible for carrying out policy and the resident Africans who have been schooled in these principles. In particular, it is necessary to understand that they cannot be thought of in the terms with which the English speaking world is familiar.

The French and Anglo American Constitutional, and consequently legal and administrative, systems are so fundamentally different that many of the terms used in one system literally cannot be translated with meaning into the other system. The impact of the two systems upon Black Africa and Africans with their own vastly different traditional ways may be called the political and social phenomenon that has opened the second half of the Twentieth Century.

The English speaking world, generally, relies on the principle of English Common Law, by which Constitutional changes, laws and points of administration may originate almost anywhere. There is a great pyramid, with original authority and initiative as numerous as the blocks of the base. In the United States, for example, the Congress is prohibited by the Constitution or has desisted from producing legislation in certain fields. In such fields the State Legislative bodies, whatever they may be called, are free to make their own laws, or if the State Constitution forbids, or they do not see fit to do so, the County, City and down to the smallest administrative unit may provide the laws they may consider to be necessary. They may even flaunt national or State law with the argument that local conditions or wishes are paramount on the

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point at issue. There are American citizens who may participate in law-making locally, yet who are not eligible to participate in the national legislative body. The Anglo-American courts also contribute to law making by making decisions which may eventually become precedents when the law is considered to be unclear or not applicable, or even when the law is considered to be unjust by Common Law standards.

Under the French system there is one source of law -- the National Parliament acting within the principles contained in the Constitution. The position of original authority and initiative is reversed in the pyramid. They rest in the broad principles of the Constitution -- the single stone at the top -- and are expanded into working arrangements at the next level down in the decrees and other enactments of Parliament. Below this level the administrative and judicial authorities can only carry out the law, but in doing so may interpret and adapt to local conditions. The Minister issues regulations and instructions within the meaning of an act of Parliament, and their subdivisions may issue further regulations and instructions within the limits set at the higher levels.

If, for example, Parliament had never seen fit to decree that there should be traffic regulations, there would be none, and the police could make no traffic arrests.

A court of law can take jurisdiction in a case only if an act of Parliament is involved, and then only if it is the kind of court specified in an act as competent in the category of law concerned. The courts and the judiciary cannot set precedents, and, consequently, the decision of one court has no influence on the

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decision of the same or another court in a later similar case.

The elective bodies in the Departments and Municipalities of Metropolitan France, the Overseas Territories and elsewhere in the French Union are not true legislatures, for only the National Parliament makes laws. They function substantially the same as American legislatures in local tax and budgetary matters, but beyond this they may only advise the administrative authorities who are bound or guided by instructions from their Ministries in the central government. The elective body may thus question the constitutionality or Parliamentary legality of an interpretation by the local administrative authority of his instructions from his Ministry. The body may suggest to him a better way of doing something, or one that it feels would be more agreeable to the local population. Although the administrative authority -- the Prefect or Governor -- is not bound by these suggestions, he frequently accepts them if only in the interest of his own future career.

Like the courts, the elective bodies cannot establish a precedent or make a law. In point of fact, however, because of greater budgetary and tax powers through which they can force some policy issues, the Federal "Grands Conseils" of French West and Equatorial Africa and the "Conseils Generaux" of the twelve territories in the two federations, have somewhat more power than the equivalent elective bodies of the Metropolitan and Overseas Departments.

Thus, the greatest political concessions and the fullest measure of participation in government which, under the French Constitutional system, can be granted to any inhabitant of any



French territory is participation through representatives elected by him in the Parliament of the French Republic. Hence, the French view holds, the Constitution has provided self government for the inhabitants of the "Overseas Territories" by extending to all of them the maximum expression of political participation, the right of citizenship, which includes the right of participation in the sole law making machinery.

## FRENCH POLICY IN WEST AFRICA AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

### I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH POLICY IN WEST AFRICA

The controlling policy of the French toward the native inhabitants of French West Africa has been and still is to "make Frenchmen of them". This statement has frequently been made in explaining the attitude of the French Government toward the peoples in its territories and colonies.\* After a series of partial steps in previous years, full citizenship in the French Union was conferred on the natives in 1946 with the adoption of the new Constitution in that year. Through lack of any other definition or a set of precise conditions to be fulfilled individually or by groups, this in practice has resulted in the situation today by which any Black or White native of French West Africa who can identify himself may exercise all the rights, privileges and duties of French citizens without further formality.

The foregoing statement may appear to suffer from oversimplification as do all simple statements on complex problems, and may even appear to be bizarre--or, in detail, simply not worthy of belief.

There is no question that in creating the French Union, the Constitution of the Fourth Republic of October 27, 1946 converted into the highest law of that Union those principles behind a long series of laws, decrees and traditions governing the position of the inhabitants of France's tropical African

\* Crocker: On Governing Colonies, (p. 54).

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African holdings. The new Constitution confirmed the many administrative acts of Governors, Administrators and even explorers, while discarding once and for all the administrative acts of others which were at variance with these principles. This does not mean that these principles will never be changed, but rather that it would take a Constitutional change, virtually a new Constitution, to alter them, and it is unlikely that anyone would have the political temerity to reverse principles which for the moment seem to be supporting peace and contentment.

The possibility should not be excluded that some hidden factor in the present legal and social situation might upset everything, but nothing significant has been seen or reliably reported which could be called definitely an upsetting, hidden factor.

It is hoped that there will always be men of good will and sound judgment who will be able to temper the lofty principles of policy to the needs of reality in a part of the world which has already suggested explosive possibilities; in a continent where some hundreds of millions of people are being brought, from pre-stone age for many of them, by a variety of means--slow or fast, encouragement or compulsion, precept or compromise, or a little of each mixed together--to the current democratic, capitalistic age in much less than 50 years.

Principles of policy were pronounced by the French as early as the 16th Century. Their historians are the first to explain

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to explain that action however did not always follow high policy. For one thing, the general public of France in the early days had somewhat less than any interest in Black Africa, and what interest there was, was largely on the part of individuals and small groups. Commercial men and traders in the Western European ports were attracted by the thought of extending their business and profits; the missionary spirit of the Christian churches was evident there as early as the 15th Century; Government people saw political advantage to be gained through some maneuver involving nebulous Africa; and now and then a scientific person caught a glimmer of what Black Africa held.

The individualism of the French is well known. The French conquests, or "Pacification" as they prefer to call it, in West Africa; their development of the social order and economy, is the story of individuals. These men, often inspired, were the executors of principles of policy laid down in simple, frequently idealistic terms, by some decree or Parliamentary Act in the Mother country. It is doubted that they received many detailed instructions; generally they proposed and proceeded to execute a plan after receiving approval on only the main point of policy.

In implementing policies with a humanitarian or social significance, the French differed from the other Western European powers in dealing with African areas; the others were more concerned with trade and strategic position for their own sakes. Until the present century, all of these countries

countries, including France, were fighting each other in Africa. Sometimes it was a part of a larger war; at other times they were simply struggling over what they thought were the best parts of Africa. The number of times many of these parts changed hands is so great as to make very dull reading in history.

The unregimented initiative of the French and the almost constant warfare among the European powers ~~for~~ over centuries are the cause of so little coordinated effort and so little pooling of knowledge among Europeans in Africa.

There grew up as many, in fact more, policies concerning Africa and Africans than there were European nations with interests in Africa. Until very recently, no colonial power wanted the others to know what it was doing, or how. Even today it can be said that a certain amount of suspicion and jealousy exists among them. This is the main reason why now there is such difficulty in understanding Africa. Perhaps the whole is too large and complex to be grasped, and thus one takes the word of this or that man who has "traveled in Africa", and accepts his word that "all Africans are black of skin and kinky of hair", or that "Africa is desert and steaming jungle". One thus assumes that Africa, being known to Europeans longer than were the Americas, should be better known to some group somewhere, although one may not know who they are.

The European French have long been known for their devotion to moral and social principles, particularly in the political or Confucian sense, of man's relation to man.

The slave

The slave trade out of West Africa was probably the first feature of Black Africa that forced itself upon the French consciousness above the individual or private interest level. Somehow, the question of a trader collecting human beings in Africa and selling them in Europe came to the attention of the Parliament of Bordeaux, which in 1571 declared that "France, Mother of Liberty, does not permit anyone to be a slave."

After that notable pronouncement, even though quoting it from time to time, the French and other Western Europeans busied themselves, often without government approval or rather tacitly ignored by their governments, in getting what they could out of West and Central Africa, whether in the form of beeswax, gum arabic, mahogany, white ivory, or Black Ivory; i.e.: human beings.

Although French and other historians have quoted the Parliament of Bordeaux statement, little appears to have been done on that policy until the 18th Century when "English Methodists and Quakers, followed by French philosophers called to the public attention that this (slavery) was a problem."\*

The French first installed themselves in West Africa under the leadership of Caullier, who founded St. Louis in Senegal in 1659. Earlier contacts had been made with West Africa but they did not last. St. Louis ~~was first to become~~ flourished as a trading center ~~the most important French-African personal relationship~~

and then

\* Richard-Molard, A.O.F., p. 132

and then to wither<sup>ed</sup> away to a second-rate colonial outpost when it became clear that St. Louis was not the natural point of entry to Africa, and had very little in the way of economic hinterland. The first great experiments by the French of citizenship and native participation in government took place in St. Louis.

This now decaying and colorful river town deserves a high place in the history of human racial relationships, for whatever good may be found in White-Black relationships on a free basis were first tried out here by the French. The results in St. Louis itself are not, perhaps, startling but the pioneer principles developed there have been transferred to Dakar, Conakry, Abidjan, and other newer cities of greater economic interest.

The French acquired their second, but smaller base for penetration of Africa by taking the island of Gorée, in what is now Dakar Harbor, from the Dutch in 1677. Gorée's main function in history, whoever held it at any one time, was as a slave staging port. Curiously enough at that time there were also White-Black relationships of a free nature on the island --which introduces another element, the fact that the slave trade in Black Africa was not invented by Europeans. They found it there, and the European traders generally worked off shore, purchasing their wares from Black or Maure owners and traders.

French public interest, aside from philosophical considerations on the Rights of Man, was focussed on the hinterland of the Senegal River; the economy of the Niger River; the making of the desert to blossom.\* This public interest took for

granted

\*The individualistic spirit of the French is unquestionally  
(cont'd p. 17)

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granted that St. Louis was a port. After all, was it not at the mouth of the great Senegal River? And as Dakar emerged-- that it too was a very great natural port? A couple of good ports would serve the hinterland of any country. Perhaps the French public mind was misled by their geography books, as we are often misled today. France appears on a double page, and the entire continent of Africa occupies one page.

In the meantime, the British and, in one area, the Portuguese, had been busy assuring possession of all the rest of the natural harbors in West Africa. The British even held St. Louis and Dakar at various times, but gave them up in bargaining treaties. The French ended up with one great natural harbor and a river mouth which they hoped would be a fine port. The port at the mouth of the river is no longer a real seaport, and the great natural harbor is at an uneconomic distance from the areas of development. At the conclusion of the Berlin Conference of 1885, the British delegate triumphantly said: "We have left the Gallic Rooster only some sand to scratch." This, of course, referred to the large expanses of the Sahara which are now French.

The British

\* (cont'd from p. 16)

responsible for the fact that most of the early 19th Century exploration in the interior of West and Central Africa was made by Frenchmen; and the fact that they picked some of the most formidable parts of Africa in which to do their exploring. Of those who lived to report where they went and what they did, it is difficult, with what is now known, to understand how they survived. Often traveling alone or even with a party on foot they journeyed thousands of miles across lands that few men, prior to the second World War, even dared to attempt with the medical and automotive assistance then available.

Starting with the astounding journey of René Caillié in 1827-28 from Rio Nunez, in what is now (cont'd p. 18)



The British acquired most of the rare harbors in West Africa which have natural economic hinterlands, and eventually came to handle much of the produce of the neighboring French colonies. This situation in turn is changing as a result of modern techniques in transportation. As long as it lasted it had a definite effect on French policy for, as the French progressed inland, inspired by the glorious deeds of their explorers, they were forced by circumstances to develop the country from within.

That tradition continues today. Some of the most effective and expanding social and economic developments of the French are so far from the seas that they may be called invisible to the world at large.

By 1809 as a result of European conflicts, local battles along the coast in Africa, and treaty settlements among the European powers, the French had no territory left in West Africa. All during the time from the noble declaration of the Parliament of Bordeaux in 1571 to the Treaty of Paris of 1814-- 243 years --the major French activity had seemed to consist of trading erratic blows with the English, and sometimes with the Portuguese, Dutch or anyone else who happened to be around.

When the

\* (cont'd from p. 16)

French Guinea, to discover Timbuktu, and continuing across the Sahara to the Mediterranean, a succession of explorers virtually swarmed over an area the size of the United States.

It is interesting to note that Marshal Joffre of World War I fame was of that hardy band. In command of troops he was the first European commander to publish a report on the "discovery" of an explorer.

(cont'd p. 19)

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When the legal traffic in slaves was finally stopped in 1807, a new concept of colonialism consisting of economic development with the participation of the local population began to take shape. The idea had time to germinate in France after 1809, when they had no place in Africa to try it out.

Before this time, the colonizing power or company in many areas of the world had usually enslaved local labor outright and worked them as long as they lasted. An example of this was in the mines of South America where, as the supply of local labor decreased, slaves from Africa were brought in. The same process occurred in Haiti in agricultural activities. In some other areas, the colonizer had looked upon the native population as a menace to be driven away or exterminated and had attempted to do this in several spots.

The situation in the early colonization of North America was quite different with reference to the labor supply. Here only a small indigenous population existed and these were not used as a labor supply at any time. The European colonists at first had performed their own labor in the new land or brought their own people. In effect, they transported to the new country elements of their own economy at the subsistence and artisan level. On this base they sought profits by engaging in the straight exploitation of the fabulous natural resources.

They supplied

\* (cont'd from p. 16)

From Gaille to Joffre, and on to the Citroen trans-Sahara expedition of 1927, what little interest the French public may have had in Black Africa was captured by these exploits, and centered attention on the Interior.  
(End of footnote)

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They supplied the raw products for the mouths and mills of Europe. <sup>As time went on,</sup> <sup>in certain areas</sup> /quantities of cheap labor were required/to gather and assemble natural products, to plant and harvest other commodities and to move them. The economic pressure ~~led~~ led early to the importation of Black African slaves, strong, docile workers, with a minimum of needs, especially in the Southern Atlantic Coast area and the West Indies.

In this atmosphere, the fact of the end of new supplies of slaves for French plantations in the New World caused the idea of using a colonial labor supply in its own land to crystallize in the thinking of French officialdom.

When the First Treaty of Paris, May 30, 1814, brought peace and friendship after the Napoleonic wars and restored to France the parts of West Africa she had held on January 1, 1792, French plans were evolved for European colonization in West Africa, but with the assistance of native labor. These plans did not necessarily call for slave or forced labor. It was assumed that natives would be glad to work for pay and thus improve their condition. There was <sup>also</sup> /the thought that European settlers might prosper somewhat as they had done in North America. The latter idea was tried out shortly after the Schmaltz party arrived but failed so dismally that it need not be mentioned again.

The fate of the first colonization and development party is well known as the story of the Frigate Medusa (Méduse) catastrophe. Appointed by Louis XVIII, Colonel Schmaltz, his party, supplies and equipment, set forth in 1816 for

St. Louis

St. Louis on the Frigate Medusa and three smaller vessels. The Medusa foundered on a sand bank\* off Mauretania on July 2, 1816, where most of the people and all of the money and supplies were lost. Colonel Schmaltz and a few others reached St. Louis. There the British Commander, who had not heard of the Treaty of Paris, refused to turn over his command to the French. Repulsed and without supplies or equipment, Schmaltz and his small band made their way on foot 170 miles or so south to what is now Dakar.

Six months after the destruction of the Medusa, the French took official possession of St. Louis on January 25, 1817, and Gorée on February 15, 1817. Colonel Schmaltz immediately set out to develop a variety of plantations, mostly on the south bank of the Senegal River. He found that some of the local tribal people were friendly and glad to work for and with the French. Certain others, notably the White Maures, who were accustomed to have the Negroes work for them; the Black Bambaras, who were accustomed to taking things where they found them; and the Mandingoes, who considered themselves the leading merchants of labor, objected to these new developments. Colonel Schmaltz therefore realized that some military measures were necessary, such as small forts to keep the Maures away from the tribes friendly to him. Then, too, industrious tribes became so impressed with what the French were doing that they began

\* The sandbank was not charted then, nor is it now. At that place sandbanks appear and disappear; one of the many symbols of the inhospitality of the West African coast.

began to plant, cultivate and reap, and since they knew nothing of land ownership, they encroached on the French plantations. The French, with friendly native cooperation, were cultivating lands which had never been put to any use. A very confused situation developed. Fighting, pillaging and slaughter had always occurred between various African groups, but now there were new incentives or excuses for fighting. Some of the natives working on the French developments fought off the interlopers. Others lost interest in regular work. Foreseeing threats to their supremacy, war-like tribes attacked the newly agricultural peoples.

This led, years later, to the development of a more specific French policy toward West Africa, that of "Pacification". In the meantime, when the Minister of the Navy and Colonies heard of Colonel Schmaltz' forts and military activities, he stated that the French must remain neutral in the midst of native quarrels. Schmaltz replied that this was impossible. He was promptly recalled (June 3, 1820). His successor, Lecoupe, very quickly arrived at the same conclusion; nothing could be done in Senegal without peace, and peace could not be obtained without a violent upheaval. He was quickly replaced by Baron Roger. Roger agreed in principle but was opposed to Pacification by force, even on the limited scale set up by Schmaltz. Under Roger exports of agricultural products fell to nothing and he restricted his activities to an experimental garden.\*

After Roger's

\* One hundred and ten years later his garden became the great development project of Richard Toll. -22-

After Roger's return to France in 1836, his successors revived the Schmaltz and Lecoupe thesis; that nothing could be done for France or Africa "until the peoples had been forcibly led to peaceful sentiments" among themselves.

Lacking perhaps the political support in Paris, or the military genius to accomplish the task with a minimum of bloodshed and distress, the plans of the French leaders in West Africa withered away and Senegal reverted to a simple trading economy of gum arabic, gold, wax, and skins. Nevertheless, a policy was slowly taking shape.

Twenty-seven successive Governors from 1816 to 1850 all came to the same conclusion: A stop must be put to the wars, massacres, slave raids, the bloodthirst of the White Maures and the power thirst of the Black tyrants; without the ensuing peace nothing could be done. So much time, talk, philosophy and writing had been devoted to this thesis that when action commenced it was not only high policy but also the reasoned judgment of those men who took part in shaping it.

Following the earlier abolishment of the slave trade by most of the Governments which had permitted or tolerated it, the French Government began in 1816 to talk a great deal about liberating existing slaves, but did nothing definite until 1848 when the Second Republic decreed (May 5, 1848) the abolition of slavery in all French possessions. The slaves in St. Louis and Gorée were freed on August 23, 1848 in compliance with the decree, but elsewhere in Senegal, notably on the Cap Vert peninsula, the native slave owners and traders paid

paid no attention to the new law.

French governments since that time have consistently attempted to carry out the provisions of that and subsequent similar decrees in their African territories. Today they have virtually completed the task, in spite of the uncooperative attitude of certain tribes who have been traditional slaves to other tribes.

The Government of 1848 in emancipating the slaves in Africa apparently wished to complete its humanitarian work by carrying this to its logical goal. A decree provided that the freed slaves should become not only free Blacks like millions of others in Africa, but become French citizens with full voting privileges.

Thus was set the policy which reached its full expression in the Constitution of the Fourth Republic of 1946, nearly a hundred years later.

At first, the Black French citizens were only certain inhabitants of St. Louis and Gorée. As time went on, one decree or another broadened somewhat the categories of Africans who should ~~be French citizens~~ or could be French citizens, but no great segments of the population outside of Senegal became citizens until 1946, when categories were abolished and all became citizens.

By mid-19th Century, principles of emancipation and citizenship had been established, but nothing had been done to apply them to any of the centers of French influence outside  
of the two

of the two ports and trading centers. Elsewhere the constant threat of tribal warfare and raiding discouraged any kind of progress. The pressure, moral and economic, to pacify the interior, which had been building up for over thirty years, crystallized under the new regime of the Empire.

A Frenchman has said: "A little military glory would not be displeasing to the new regime"\* particularly when the moral logic would be unassailable--a little bloodshed to prevent many times more. A decree of November 30, 1852, reestablished the fortified trading post at Podor, about 140 miles up the Senegal River. Six hundred troops and their equipment arrived at Podor in March 1854. A few days later, one tribe made raids on its neighbors; the French troops set forth to punish the aggressors, and the French policy of Pacification was set in motion.

Unfortunately, the French losses in this first effort were heavy. Although the engagement itself was successful, the Commander, Protet, was much criticized for bungling. The business men and traders of Senegal apparently felt that he was weak in negotiation, as well as tactics. They petitioned the Government in Paris to name Captain Faidherbe as military Governor and to extend the tour of duty for governors to seven years to make sure he stayed long enough to do the job.

Faidherbe, as a soldier, had become thoroughly familiar with the whole colony and held the respect of everyone. He was appointed Governor of Senegal in December 1854.

The next

\* Encycl. A.O.F. V-I, p. 51.



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The next few years of Pacification under Faidherbe was a story of personal accomplishment. With a minimum of combat troops and only token occupation forces, scarcely forces at all, he "pacified" a vast area in ten years.

He recruited and accepted volunteers of native Negroes, thereby inventing the famous "Senegalese Tirailleurs". This task of recruiting, training and holding the recruits was no mean accomplishment. Faidherbe studied their characteristics and peculiarities, adapted Army regulations and discipline to their sense of self respect, and thus started the system of integration of Africans not only into the French military, but eventually into the administrative, medical and other operations of the French Government.

The histories of West Africa, and the journals of travelers, soldiers and traders in the mid-19th Century abound in stories of the warrior tribes. As the French and other nationalities circulated more and more into this hitherto unknown land, the accounts of massacre, mayhem, and what we now call "scorched earth" campaigns among the various tribes, add up to a horrifying, formidable and complex picture.

The judgment of Schmaltz and Lecoupe was confirmed, probably on a much larger scale than they could have foreseen. Observers concluded that this strife and bloodshed had gone on from time immemorial, and since it amounted to custom, almost a system; the only way to accomplish anything else at all was to change the system.

As Pacification

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As Pacification progressed, some of the native leaders felt that their authority was being undermined by the Whites and their native supporters. This was particularly true among certain Moslem religious men of the Fouta Djallon mountain region. One of them, El Hadj Omar, proclaimed a Holy War in 1854, ostensibly against native infidels, but the next year he extended his operations to include White men. He massacred and pillaged widely, wiping out native villages and engaging both French and British armies wherever they met. He campaigned over an area about the size of France for ten years. Apparently he could not be subdued by the forces available nor was he able to drive out the French and their Friends.

As Pacification by compromise, El Hadj Omar, in 1860, was induced to give up what is now, roughly, Senegal. He then concentrated on the French Sudan, where he did not always obtain the cooperation of his own people. A revolt of the Peuhls at Macina (1864) finished him politically and militarily.

The French had already started (1863) making "Pacification" treaties with local chiefs, with or without a test of arms. <sup>more than 300 of them</sup> These treaties were the practical policy development of the need which Schmaltz first saw in 1820 but which ruined him in Paris. The final element of the pattern of Pacification was now set--that element which in the course of a hundred years has become well established as a principle governing the French-Africans' relations south of the Sahara. The principle is that of participation.

The treaties

The treaties of 1863, and later, with local chiefs included the provisions that they undertake to prevent brigandage and theft; that they would encourage agriculture and commerce; and would agree that no free man would henceforth be placed in servitude.

It is true that these treaties or agreements were frequently obtained by force of arms or by the threat of force, but many chiefs signed up of their own free will. The military genius of Faidherbe, in seeking out and breaking the more ferocious warlords and despoilers, quite naturally brought many less warlike chiefs voluntarily under the French banner and encouraged them to make concessions in return for promises of protection.

Pacification by force in and around Senegal was completed in 1864, ten years after it was started. This self-contradictory but effective policy was used from time to time in other parts of what is now the Federation of French West Africa, but never again on the same scale.

Like so many pioneer efforts which are motivated by reasonably honest and beneficial intentions, the later extension of these efforts is never so difficult. Faidherbe's task was accomplished; he prepared to leave West Africa. The accomplishments of the French Policy of Pacification were summed up by his successor, Pinet-Laprade in 1865, in his goodbye speech to Faidherbe:

"When, ten years ago you took the reins of administration, we paid tribute to neighbors; the humiliations

and the violence

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"and the violence to which our commerce had to submit formed an unassailable barrier to the development of that commerce; the political and social organization of the natives had no other purpose than war and pillage; it prevented the blossoming of agriculture. By deeds glorifying our arms, by an able and wise policy, by enlightened administration adapted to the morals and customs of the natives, you have abolished those days . . . . In place of the anarchy which devastated the country around us, you have substituted the principles of order and justice, without which no society can be firmly based."\*

Almost coincident with the pronouncement of these words, the Imperial Government in Paris found that it could afford neither the money nor the troops to continue the type of Pacification that Faidherbe so successfully had established. It was well-known, however, that there were still vast expanses of West and Central Africa to which the application of the Faidherbe treatment would unquestionably bring great advantage to the natives and their land, as well as to the French.

Pinet-Laprade set out to consolidate the accomplishments of Faidherbe. Whatever he might have wished, he could not now employ force to any great extent. Therefore, resorting to a philosophy that had already been stated by philosophers or implied by laws, he instructed his subordinates: "Be benevolent always; the French influence here rests on the most solid of bases--affection."

Pinet-Laprade, nevertheless, did not neglect the sage use of force to show stubbornly quarrelsome tribes or groups that he was serious about upholding the Pacification brought about by

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\* Faidherbe, By G. Hardy,  
Coll. des Grands Coloniaux.

about by Faidherbe. After his death in 1869, the White French side of the arrangements deteriorated as frequently happens after the tension of vigilant positive action is released. Apparently, this had no noticeable effect on the native population who had by then become accustomed to Pacification and the French presence, and were apparently beginning to appreciate the benefits of peace.

Were the thoughts and acts of men from Schmaltz to Faidherbe so soundly conceived and executed that their effects were lasting? If so, the French as a whole were fortunate during the indecisive period that followed Pinet-Laprade's death.

The relations between France-in-Europe and the spheres of French influence in Black Africa as well as in the other dependent areas over nearly four centuries culminated in a single document, the Constitution of the Fourth Republic of October 27, 1946. This Constitution applies also, and in a variety of ways, to other parts of the world which are now included in the "French Union", but only its effect upon French West and Equatorial Africa will be discussed here.

The Preamble of the Constitution includes the following paragraphs:\*

"France forms with the people of its overseas territories a Union based upon equality of rights and duties without distinction of race or religion.

"The French Union is composed of nations and peoples who wish to place in common or coordinate their resources and their efforts in order to develop their civilization, increase their well-being and ensure their security.

\* Translation from French  
Embassy, Information Division,  
New York.

"Faithful

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"Faithful to her traditional mission, France proposes to guide the peoples for whom she has assumed responsibility toward freedom to govern themselves and democratically to manage their own affairs; putting aside any system of colonization based upon arbitrary power, she guarantees to all equal access to public office and the individual or collective exercise of the rights and liberties proclaimed or confirmed above."

Under Title VIII, "The French Union", the first item, Article 60, states:

"The French Union shall be composed, on the one hand, of the French Republic which comprises Metropolitan France and the overseas departments and territories, and, on the other hand, of the Associated Territories and States." #

This article leaves no doubt that the peoples of the two Federations of French West and Equatorial Africa, among others, are an integral part of the "French Republic".

The accepted French dictionary definition\* of "Republique" merits repetition here: ". . . (A) State in which the people exercise sovereignty through the intermediary of delegates elected by them, and for a specific time ..."

It is significant to note here that native Black Africans elected to the French Senate and Assembly under earlier laws participated in drafting the Constitution of 1946, and voted for it.

Except for the very limited number of citizen Africans residing in certain communities in Senegal, this new Constitution contained provisions that can only be called revolutionary; the concepts in the past development of French policy in West Africa were not new, but the application of them on this scale amounted to a "Bloodless Revolution".

The application

\* Petit Larousse.

# "Overseas---Territories" capitalized is clearly intended here.

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The application of these provisions, or principles, to the millions of people in a vast area immediately became the first priority preoccupation of the White and Black French officials and the native African leaders in French West and Equatorial Africa.



## FRENCH POLICY IN WEST AFRICA AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

### III. HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS IN FRENCH BLACK AFRICA

The policy providing the foundation for human relationships in French Black Africa can no longer be called French exclusively in the Metropolitan sense; it is rapidly becoming French in the more universal French Union sense as set forth in the Constitution of 1946. The moral, philosophical and emotional background for this policy has been touched upon in preceding chapters.

It can be said that the French formula for human relationships, as expressed in 1787 by the Constituent Assembly as the "Rights of Man", is the over-riding policy by which most other phases of policy are tested. Succeeding chapters will invariably return to this theme, for the use of these standards rules out discrimination or selection on the basis of race, color or religion. It may have taken 157 years to reach the point of their full application, but the history of those years shows that these principles were often in the minds of Frenchmen as evidenced in their frequent rationalization of any failure to apply them completely in Black Africa.

According to Jean Capelle, Rector of Education for French West Africa\*, "the Colonial formula was (originally), train the native in such a manner that he should be<sup>be</sup> able and devoted auxiliary to the European". A new formula of policy was adopted and crystallized by the principles contained in the Constitution of 1946, and summed up by M. Capelle as:

"to associate

\* Encyclopedia, AOF, Vol. I, p. 272.

"to associate our efforts with those of the African elite in order to make of the sons of these countries co-citizens in the greater Mother Country which is the French Union". This would appear to be another version of the broad policy of making "Frenchmen of them".

As a logical concomitant to the policies just described, the French policy toward racial questions or problems may be stated in the terms of the following principles:

"The more the race problem is treated as mainly a race problem, the poorer the chances of solution.

"The more class problems are treated as class problems, the sharper class consciousness and class conflict will grow.

"Conversely, the greater the emphasis on individuals as such, that is, on their abilities and possibilities, the greater the likelihood of race and class harmony."\*

These principles have not, perhaps, been officially stated so succinctly, but the essence of them appears to be in the minds of officials and many local and Metropolitan politicians to the extent of being transformed into Policy in French Black Africa. Frenchmen, experienced in Africa, have discussed the famous Seretse case of the Bamangwato tribe in Bechuanaland. It will be recalled that the Chief-designate of the tribe, Seretse Khama, was educated in Britain and married a white British girl. In 1950, Seretse's uncle, Tshekedi Khama, and a few others expressed objections to this marriage. After a great deal of publicity in the press, discussions in Parliament and in the Colonial Office, Seretse was declared by British officials to be unfit to rule his tribe and was expelled from Africa.

\* The Rediscovery of Morals,  
Dr. Henry C. Link, p. 146.

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Africa.\* The French view of this case was that the public press and certain groups of White men violated the principle of playing down race problems as such in their treatment of the case and thereby aggravated the racial problem. The tribe, they said, would probably have paid only very little attention to the case if it had not been for the publicity. The case, if it merited any attention at all, should have been handled locally on an individual or tribal basis and not as a race problem by outsiders. They pointed out that public scandals of this sort do not develop in the French African territories and are most unlikely to arise. They admitted that miscegenation does occur in the higher as well as the lower levels of society, although only rarely in recent years. Since it is inevitable, they say, it is best ignored, thus eliminating any trend towards miscegenation on the part of that ever present fringe of society that resolves alternatives in its pattern of life by choosing the forbidden. Whatever the morality of this view may be, the open fact is that miscegenation is seldom a topic for racial differences of opinion, and never becomes a political issue in French Black Africa.

Another principle of human relationships which is unquestionably in the minds of the French officials who deal with Africans may be stated as: "... the doctrine of equality ... does not state that all men must become equal; it states that all men have equal rights to make the most of the inequalities."\*\*

This expresses

\* La Guinée Française, April 22, 1950.

\*\* Op. cit. p. 101.

Link

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This expresses the reported words of the Grande Serigne of Dakar, the respected religious and temporal leader of the Lebou people. In discussing the principle of equality with this writer he held up his hand and said: "The Supreme Being made each of these five fingers different; they would be of little use if they were all the same. So with men. In His Wisdom they were created to cooperate with each other in their own ways ...". He went on to discuss the French recognition of ability and skill on an individual basis rather than on a racial or other mass basis. He did go so far as to say that in practice the general characteristics of the Blacks were somewhat different, but that they complement the general characteristics of the Whites in working together as do the fingers of the hand.

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A. ATTITUDES OF THE EUROPEANS TOWARDS THE AFRICANS  
AND OF THE AFRICANS TOWARDS THE EUROPEANS

The attitudes of the Europeans and the Africans towards each other vary as much as might be expected in a vast area incompletely organized, with poor communications, where thousands of widely separated administrateurs, planters and commercial men deal with hundreds of tribes and racial groups. Here it must be again emphasized that quite a few officials and business men classified as French or European are not White in race.

Except for a few hard-bitten, old-school planters and traders, the attitude of the established White, or European Frenchmen toward the un-evolved Africans is generally that of sympathy, tolerance, and understanding of their primitive environment. Widespread and sincere individual efforts are being made to assist them in their lot.

Naturally, the lengths to which this attitude is carried and what success is obtained, varies from place to place and depends largely upon the personality and ability of the Europeans concerned. The obvious respect and affection shown by the natives in many places for the administrateurs and other Europeans, points to the successful reception of this tolerant attitude.

Accentuated by the promulgation of the Constitution of the Fourth Republic (1946), new circumstances arose to affect French-Native relationships during the immediate post World War II period. Real trouble in these relationships was expected at a number of widely scattered places. The incidents  
of riot

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of riot and massacre which occurred in 1949 and 1950 turned out to be, largely, among African political factions and to be Communist inspired. So, instead of becoming a racial problem the troubles, in effect, strengthened the official French policy as the native leaders lost their taste for that alien ideology which inspired trouble.

Two new circumstances which were expected to lead to trouble, if friction were generated between the two races, were these: One, the influx of White Frenchmen seeking work, their fortune, or simply escape from troubled Europe; and, two, the sudden release (for millions of Africans) from secondary citizenship to equality in all respects, which was poorly understood by many of them. The opportunities for friction were, indeed, great but perhaps the sweeping application of the new policy, without reservation, was so daring that it overrode the minor points of conflict and left no grounds for ideological conflict. Potential agitators were left without ammunition for racial arguments.

The change in the caliber and numbers of the Europeans coming to Africa after the war held possibilities of unrest on the part of the Africans. Before the war, the White French population of these territories consisted of officials, traders, planters, and in the larger cities, a bare minimum of technical and professional men. Everything was, as the French say, "in equilibrium". Travel was very difficult and the menaces to health and comfort were such that only those hardy Europeans who were compelled to do so, and the rare explorer, ventured beyond the comparative but very limited comforts of Dakar, St. Louis, Conakry, Abidjan and Cotonou on the coast.

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Footnote: (page 46)

The White French population of French West Africa before the war was about 13,000, half of whom lived in Dakar. The present White French population is more than 100,000. Of these nearly two thirds are less than 30 years of age

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Immediately after the end of the war, or "Liberation" as the French call it, thousands of Frenchmen and other Europeans clamored for permits to go to West Africa. The Governments in Paris and Dakar, fearful of what might happen when these thousands learned that Africa was not the modern New World, replete with rich virgin lands, abundant resources ready for the taking, and a friendly subservient people, tightened up the restrictions on European travel to FWA and FEA. For one thing, they required, and still do, all migrants or their employers if they have a contract to deposit the equivalent of the costs of returning to Europe. The man or woman who is on the verge of becoming destitute, becomes too ill to work, or who runs afoul of certain kinds of law, is promptly shipped back to Europe. It has been said: "It is hard enough to teach the Africans citizenship and civilization, without having them see what scoundrels some Europeans can be."

Thousands of Europeans have succeeded in obtaining permission to migrate to West Africa from the time of "Liberation" (1945) to now (1954). The first waves, released from the tensions of war, and often coming from distinguished underground or Maquis activities, became suddenly imbued with the "pioneer spirit". For some this meant dedication to hard work and austere living. Others came with high hopes for quick profits or at least a pleasant life. These latter habituated the bars and restaurants of Dakar, Abidjan and a few other cities. They congregated in homes and camps. They had met the heat and  
humidity

humidity, insects, rain and mud, or the scorching sun and red dust. The men ~~were~~ clad, perhaps, only in shorts and sandals, the women often in brief sun suits. They were playful and somewhat rowdy. At times they were inclined to make a good deal of noise. They did not hold the respect of the Black French citizens, nor did they understand the Black man's nature. These newcomers seldom shared in the sense of "la mission civilisatrice" which inspired the majority of the old-time official and professional men, and some of the traders.

With this display of poor taste by the conspicuous few, the wonder is that no serious racial incidents took place. Perhaps this is a tribute to the workings of French policy. Perhaps the sense of self-respect, liberty and equality of status that was intended to be instilled in the Africans had bloomed. In a relatively short time these newcomers were assimilated into the established pattern of European life in West Africa and left no serious imprint.

It has become apparent that the like or dislike for a White European by Black Africans was generally directed to the man as an individual, not to his class or race.

The precipitous granting of citizenship, including full rights, privileges and equality with their former White masters, to illiterate, primordial West Africans, most of whom live on what is probably the most simple scale in existence in the world today, had a profound effect on their mental attitude toward Europeans. A clear distinction must be drawn between those natives of the more primitive areas whose only contact with White men has been with the administrateurs and the few others

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others specifically chosen and trained for work in those areas, and those Africans of the large urban centers such as Dakar, Abidjan and Bamako, where they have daily contact with White men of all types. A third group was not particularly affected. They are the true "evolues" and the European educated, most of whom were already citizens of the French Republic.

In the first category, the Africans have retained a certain amount of respect for the European, recognizing in him superior ability and greater force of character, being, perhaps, unaware that the man they know may, in fact, be a superior kind of European. They are accustomed to guidance from him and, in spite of equality and so-called freedom, they generally prefer to continue to accept his guidance rather than to think for themselves on matters outside of their experience.

In the second category, which includes most of those who had been given a taste of European education and customs, or were industrial or clerical workers, the new-found "equality" with their former master resulted in a period of readjustment of human relations. At first they clamored for equal privileges of pay, living conditions, and the right to hold all jobs, without at the same time putting forth any special effort of their own. There seems to have been a feeling that the granting of equality of citizenship automatically endowed them with equal training and mental prowess. The potential dangers, if this upsurge of feeling, based on misunderstanding, should turn into discontent on racial lines, were alarming to say the least.

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the least. Officials, native leaders, politicians, both Black and White, teachers, churchmen and business men, joined in a campaign of enlightenment. While this campaign was going on, the entire complex of social, labor, et cetera, laws was revised, and the many education, social, welfare and health acts put into effect.

There were some strikes and other labor disorders, particularly in 1948, but they were eventually settled with little or no violence. The disorders of 1949 and 1950 were caused by other forces. Human relationships weathered the storm and moved into calm seas.

By and large, the racial policy practiced by leading Europeans throughout French West Africa is that of meeting Africans at the intellectual level, the same as practiced by members of the White races among themselves. White professional men in Europe, let us say, who maintain certain types of dress, living and deportment, do not find sufficient in common with factory workers of limited education to induce them to mix extensively. At the same time these factory workers find the living standards of the professional classes stuffy and their conversation boring. The same thing is happening in French-African society, regardless of color.

Friendly and easy fraternization between White and Black can be observed at various social levels. Much of the African population is, of course, not included in this pattern of association; these are the primitives, the illiterates and the lower laboring and agricultural levels which are not represented in Africa by White Europeans.

Along

Along with all the reforms of 1946, segregation, never widely applied in the French territories, has all but disappeared. Where it appears to exist it will usually be found to be only natural selection; a private social club might have only White Europeans as members, and a similar club might be composed only of Africans educated in Europe, but still another club might have both Black and White members. French citizens of African blood may live in any quarter of the town subject only to the zoning laws as to type and quality of house; they may attend the cinema and sit in any seat and they are served in restaurants so long as their dress and manners are suitable to the standards of the place. This does not mean that Africans must necessarily wear European clothing. The minority, French citizens of white blood, may do the same. The African citizens attend official social functions and ceremonies and they have access to all the courts of the land. Participation in what might be called the European kind of life is confined, in practice, to the more advanced "évolués", those who have acquired some European culture and the necessary economic means. The emergence into high social levels of a sizeable group of Africans holding high elective positions under the Constitution of 1946 was one of the first noticeable effects of their new status. Africans held elective positions before 1946, but the positions were cloaked with lesser powers and dignity, and except for the Senators and Deputies from Senegal, there was a consciously held color line as concerned eligibility for certain

for certain posts. There is still a certain "color line" in the psychology of a few of the White French inhabitants which is present in the background of their thinking and behavior. Its application has been considerably weakened by the terms of the Constitution of 1946, but it still exists.

The President of Tuskegee Institute, Dr. Patterson, while on a trip through Africa was quoted in the leading newspaper of FWA\* as saying: "I noticed with particular pleasure the complete absence of racial discrimination and the many evidences of the real interest with which France helps the natives to help themselves."

\* ~~Paris~~-Dakar, December 29, 1950.

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B. THE GROWING CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE AFRICANS IN THEIR  
RELATIONS WITH METROPOLITAN FRANCE

A good deal of chaos in human relationships in French Black Africa, as was pointed out in the preceding paragraphs, occurred during the first four or five years under the sweeping changes of 1946. Much of the turmoil revolved around the activities of the RDA, (Rassemblement Democratique Africain).

The full story of the rise and decline of the Communist-inspired RDA cannot be told here. Suffice it to say that the rulers of the RDA, founded in 1946, had every intention of profiting from the chaos to become the controlling political force in French Black Africa. They recruited members from all classes of African society, possibly intending eventually to use the racial issue to destroy what is now called Western influence.

Because French policy had never permitted anything to be done clearly along racial lines, the RDA had difficulty in fomenting racial issues. They had to concentrate on class and anti-administration issues which did not exactly follow color lines. But there were in the ranks of the RDA wealthy native landowners and planters, professional men and influential chieftains.

As each new issue was developed it would be found to tread on the toes of the basic interests of one group or another of the prominent Party workers.

The lack of clearly definable human relations issues brought confusion and eventual wholesale desertion from the party.

By 1951

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By 1951 the reaction was in full swing. The extreme left activities of the RDA had proven to be more violent than the leading Africans had bargained for, and the masses found that the rioting and bloodshed did not bring the fine things they had been promised. The peaceful cooperation within the French pattern of free, easy and equal human relationships began to look better and better.

The newspapers and public meetings blossomed with announcements, and even paid advertisements by one prominent African after another, or groups of them, telling of their resignation from the party and their reasons.

The traditional chiefs in the Ivory Coast, the scene of RDA's greatest success joined forces. One hundred and four of them, assembled at Abidjan to celebrate the opening of the Vridi Canal, signed a declaration on February 5, 1951 which contained these words:

"The undersigned ... chiefs declare their unfailing attachment to France. Heirs of the Chiefs who have ruled this Country long before the White People's arrival, they thank France for having linked their activity to her Administration and for having respected their traditions, thus allowing them to play their part as the populations' representatives with the French Authorities and maintain their place with the African populations. They approve the constitutional enactments by which the principle of this cooperation is maintained.

"Unfortunately a political party receiving its orders from outside the French Union has violated the principles set out in this Constitution and has damaged the respect and authority which were linked with their traditional duty. They blame the Rassemblement Democratique Africain (RDA) and its Head, Houphouët, for being responsible for disorders, violence, pillage, insurrection and bloodshed caused by the violation of the Republican laws and non-recognition of tradition. ..."

A few months



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A few months after the traditional chiefs in this and other declarations had made clear what they thought about their relations with France and the French, the RDA party took on a new face. The strong man of the party had been Houphouet-Boigny, a wealthy planter, doctor, and politician, and one of the most influential native leaders in West Africa. He was also a Deputy in the French National Assembly.

His statements quoted below had been made many times by many African leaders. For him and his lieutenants to make them completed the picture and eliminated the one great source of discord between White and Black, and between Black and Black. This is not to say that the many political parties do not today dispute and vie with each other; they do, but within good democratic limits, accepting the higher principles of human relationships.

On October 6, 1951\*, with elaborate stage setting in Abidjan, Houphouet-Boigny denounced the previous liaison of himself and the RDA with the Communist Party. He appealed for harmony, cooperation, union, loyalty to France, respect for law and authority, and so forth. "Be men, conscious of your rights, but also, and above all, of your duties (as citizens) which are more numerous." These were remarkable words from a man who, during the previous five years, had been exhorting the people to civil disobedience and telling them that the governors would be taking orders from him.

On the same program was Dignan Bailly, prominent politician and sworn enemy of all that the RDA stood for. He said:

"The new

\* La Cote d'Ivoire, October 10, 1951.

"The new constitutional laws have permitted you to engage in politics, but you must realize that politics is not a school for eternal hate and rancor--a Deputy has said 'In politics one must know how to forget, and forget quickly.' This is why, as far as I am concerned, I sponge out the past, in order to consider only the future of Ivory Coast in accepting the reconciliation that Houphouet requests today.

"... At the moment when the international sky darkens, it is essential that France can count on all her children. For this the union of all the Africans is necessary."

Houphouet then spoke again and said many things, among them:

"Forget, pardon, pardon those who have done you so much harm." ...

"... By your spirit of discipline show that it depends on us and us alone that Ivory Coast should be a happy country where Whites and Blacks can live together, even though opinions might sometimes differ."

Houphouet-Boigny continued after this meeting to campaign for the policy of peaceful cooperation.

Later, in a press interview\*, he is quoted as saying:

"France has engaged herself never to conduct war of aggression. But it is clear that all citizens of the French Union, Black and White, must rise up as one single man against any enemy who might threaten the liberties and the independence of France."

In a speech on November 10, 1951\*\* he said that just as Africans felt at home in France, so Frenchmen could feel at home in Africa. "The accusation of some Frenchmen that we want to drive the French out of Africa is false," he insisted, "... for the work of the French in Black Africa brings only profit to my people and benefits to Africa."

Perhaps the most significant of Houphouet's remarks was the following: "If the French should leave Africa, not only internal troubles would result, but others would be tempted to come here in their place."

\* La Cote d'Ivoire, October 27, 1951.

\*\* La Cote D'Ivoire, Abidjan, Nov. 12, 1951.

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### C. THE EURAFRICANS

There are now in French West Africa and Togo approximately 25,000 persons of mixed African and European blood known as Eurafricans. The first generation of these people are usually born of Black African mothers and White European fathers. The second and succeeding generations are generally the offspring of marriages between Eurafricans. These people form a third racial group in FWA whose problems stem more from their social and legal status than from their strictly racial situation.

Discrimination, itself, is not a prominent feature of the French attitude toward mulattoes; it is perhaps stronger in the minds of the native Africans than it is in the minds of the White French. Contrary to the custom in the United States where all persons having any Black African blood are generally considered to be "Negroes", the mixed-race people of French West Africa are more closely associated by the native Africans themselves with Europeans than they are with the Negro race.

In the early days of the French conquest and Pacification of Senegal, the children of the French colonialists and native mothers, whether or not married, were considered to be Europeans and were accorded all the legal and social rights of Europeans. This was more a matter of local custom than of law. Many of those Eurafricans rose to high positions in the Government, the Army, and in the professions. The children of unmarried mothers were frequently recognized by their fathers

and generally

and generally given educations. Many of the Eurafricans were and are the offspring of legitimate marriages between people of the two races. Such marriages have been known since the earliest days in the enfranchised communities of Senegal, and the offspring were legally recognized as full French citizens. Their present day descendants express considerable pride in their ancestry.

Later in the 19th Century and early in the 20th, as a larger number of European French troops, Administrateurs, traders and planters came to Senegal and spread out into other parts of what is now FWA, the children of mixed unions without marriage or recognition were no longer recognized as Europeans. The customs followed at St. Louis and Gorée gradually disappeared. The later arrivals rarely made public acknowledgement of their native consorts or mistresses and rarely admitted parenthood apart from legal marriages. Failing individual recognition or general social acceptance, the status of such children was determined by interpreting existing laws, most of which were the basic French laws concerning marriage, paternity, inheritance and the descent of citizenship.

Prior to 1949 French law and official policy overlooked the Eurafricans as such. By interpretation of existing laws, a person born in Africa was a European if his European parent recognized him. Without such recognition the person was legally a native African and, since no African father gave him a name or tribal status, he was often classified as "unidentified" like the most primitive people of the "Bush"

of unknown

of unknown or obscure origin. At best, he was considered as a member of the race and tribe of the locality of his birthplace.

As a group the Euraficans considered themselves to be European Frenchmen because of their European fathers, or grandfathers. But, in practice, the great majority of them alive in 1949 had been unable, for these technical legal reasons, to assert the European nature of their origins. On the other hand, they were not usually accepted by their African relations.

The offspring of mixed un-married unions therefore found themselves in a twilight world. Because of their color and physical characteristics, they were not generally accepted by the families and tribes of their mothers, many of whom were forced to abandon them. Even though the native families were at times willing to accept them, tribal taboos and customs forbade it. On the other hand, although they had some European mental and physical characteristics, they did not have access to European schools, employment and social life. This was not for racial reasons but only because they had no European family or connections to encourage or sponsor them.

Some of them were taken care of in Government or church orphanages during their early years and turned loose as soon as they could support themselves. Several of them, through great personal ability and initiative, managed to obtain good educations and reasonably good employment, but always behind them was the tragedy of their origin; namely, that they could  
not know

not know who their fathers were and sometimes did not know who were their mothers. Consequently, they had no family names, a matter of supreme importance if they were to live in tribal Africa.

To those members of this group who were reasonably intelligent and sensitive, this lack was a very real impediment to their well-being. Some members of this group, as well as others outside of it, felt that this more or less justified a grudge against Society in general, and this attitude, in turn, in the minds of such a fairly intelligent group has constituted a danger to society, particularly if the group, or individual members of it, should be approached by outside influences with ulterior motives.

After many years during which these people suffered as a group from rejection by all sides, an organization was authorized by the Government on August 8, 1944. It was organized by the Eurafricans themselves under the name of "L'Association Philantropique des Mulâtres Français". As is frequently true with many new organizations, operational difficulties soon developed. Some of its leaders pursued private interests and had political aspirations. After internal differences of opinion and changes in officers during 1948, the organization was finally reorganized by government authorization on a new basis with a constitution and by-laws dated February 15, 1950. It took the name of "Union des Eurafricans de L'A.O.F., de L'A.E.F. et du Togo".\* It was formed for the purpose

\* Because of the newness of European influences in French Equatorial Africa the problems there are not so acute as in FWA and Togo. Subsequent quoted references to "FWA" apply also to FEA and Togo.

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purpose of clarifying their legal status, fostering their social betterment, and working collectively for their economic and cultural advancement as a group and as individuals. Among the objectives described in Article III of the new association are the following:

"To group all the French Eurafricans of F.W.A., F.E.A., and Togo in an atmosphere of solidarity and fraternity.

"To work to maintain in the spirit and the heart of mixed races of F.W.A. time honored sentiments of fidelity towards France which they have always had.

"To combat racial prejudices and to oppose all racial discriminations which are the sources of injustice and hate.

"To improve the conditions of life of Eurafricans in F.W.A.

"To see that the civil and military administrations as well as private enterprises observe the principles of equality of the Eurafricans with French citizens who originate in the Metropole.

"To aid Eurafricans of both sexes who are unemployed, but worthy of help, to find work.

"To advise and assist African mothers of mixed race children not recognized by their European fathers in order that they can bring up and educate their children in the French manner according to principles of morality and probity.

"To carry out by all the means in its power the saving physically, intellectually and morally of abandoned Eurafrican children.

"To create organizations and services for the assistance of needy Eurafricans."

This new organization now has a membership of approximately 8,000 out of an estimated 25,000 of mixed European and African blood in F.W.A. It provides for sponsoring members; persons who are not of mixed blood, but who are interested in their problems, and for honorary members who are "honorably

are "honorably known persons who have rendered services to the Union and who have manifested a favorable disposition to it." A considerable number of the French officials of the area are sponsoring members. The Union is financed mainly by its members and friends. The Government grants modest sums of money to it from time to time as a part of the social development plans.

A Eurafrican élite of more than fifty professors, engineers, lawyers, magistrates, administrateurs, army officers, priests, et cetera, have been drawn together, and, perforce, have become leaders in this organization. There is also a considerable number of young scholarship students from this category attending various of the larger schools in Africa and France.\* A Eurafrican born in Africa is now President of the Grand Conseil of French West Africa, the highest political position in the Federation.

The officers of the Union des Eurafricains emphasize both in conversation and in their monthly publication, "L'Eurafricains", that politics and religion have no part in their activity and are strictly forbidden to be mentioned; and that their sole aims are those which have been stated above.

A source

\* Another, even smaller, group in F.W.A. consists of mixed-race Frenchmen from Martinique and Guadeloupe who have come there in the normal course of transfers in the government services. A number of professional people of European-African mixture have also come to FWA from the Western Hemisphere colonies of France in pursuit of greater opportunities. By a curious anomaly, these people, born in the Americas and many of them of predominantly African blood, are classed both officially and by social custom as "Europeans" by other Europeans and by Africans, rather than as Eurafricans.



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A source of great gratification and encouragement to the Union des Eurafricains was a decree of the Government General of F.W.A., dated December 12, 1949, abrogating certain old laws on paternity. In the words of the Secretary General of F.W.A. to the President of the Eurafrican Union this decree "grants, in effect, the possibility of instituting proceedings of inquiry into paternity to all natural, non-adulterine children". (Under French law and practices the term "non-adulterine" refers to children born of mothers who were not in a state of marriage. The child of a married woman is legally the child of her husband at the time<sup>unless proven otherwise</sup>) The previous legal impediments to claiming European parentage, if that parent did not choose to recognize his child, had been the greatest single source of misery for these people.

The "Eurafrican Union of FWA, Togo and FEA" publishes and distributes among its members "The 21 Commandments of the Eurafrican". Some of these commandments are, in translation:

1. Thou shalt respect and love the Union and thy neighbor perfectly.
4. Thou shalt continue proudly to be Eurafrican although, perhaps, in eternal sacrifice.
5. Thou shalt succor abandoned infants and also thy true-hearted brothers.
6. Thou shalt respect thy sisters and thy ~~BFF~~ brothers that thou shalt merit respect in return.
7. Thou shalt give up thy complexes and the Union will sustain thee energetically.
8. Thou shalt not be racist, and all will regard thee in like manner.
9. Thou shalt go

9. Thou shalt go along with thy like without doing him any harm.
10. Thy neighbor may perhaps detest thee, but be attentive that thou doest not act likewise.
11. Thou shalt be assiduous at work in order to hasten thy advancement.
12. Thou shalt not desire favors that are not justly earned.
13. Thou shalt not emulate the frog of the fable and shalt comport thyself modestly.
14. Thou shalt roll thy tongue seven times in thy mouth before speaking without consideration.
17. Thou shalt display good breeding and thy path will be smoother.
20. Thou shalt not covet the property of others, no more than money gained dishonestly.
21. Thou shalt have no shame for thy racial brothers; on the contrary, thou shalt speak proudly of them.

#### IV. CIVIL RIGHTS, DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES OF AFRICANS IN THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

"The law of April 24, 1833, accorded to all persons born free or emancipated in the French colonies the total, without restriction, of the political and civil rights of the French citizen. ... Article 6 of the decree of April 27, 1848, suppressing slavery, provided that: 'The colonies purified of servitude ... will be represented in the national assembly'".\* These principles were only partially implemented prior to the Constitution and supplementary decrees of 1946, but they influenced the thinking of many French Statesmen and members of the public in the interim.

Thus, instead of setting up a series of steps to be taken and conditions to be fulfilled before the individual or group might graduate to some higher (to European eyes) status, such as is provided for in acquiring citizenship in a Dominion of the British Commonwealth, these old principles reached full bloom in 1946. The French Black African now has an unrestricted citizenship status, beyond or apart from which he need look no further.

While admitting that this status may have been conferred too hastily, some French officials say that it is effectively obviating the psychological disturbances which often lead to hasty, misguided aspirations for nationalism, full self-government  
as distinguished

\* A.O.F., J. Richard-Molard, p. 149.

as distinguished from participation in government, et cetera. The French African has no arbitrarily inferior citizenship status to disturb his sense of self-respect. Likewise, such an inferior status does not exist to be played up by self-seeking or subversive interests.

Even the Communists have been forced to acknowledge the success of this system, for specifically, the French Communist Party in its propaganda has recognized that it could go no further in its appeal to the Africans than the double plea for "a Communist French West Africa, within a Communist French Union".

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#### A. CIVIL STATUS

All the rights, duties, and privileges of French citizenship, including the right to vote and the privilege of European justice for all the population, constituted a whole-hearted and sweeping reform indeed. Modern citizenship, and all that it implies has developed over decades and centuries in Europe and the Americas with countless measures and means for the identification of the individual for his and the States' protection. Ancient Babylonia, Greece and Rome had their qualifications for proving citizenship. Both then and now it is necessary to have birth and marriage certificates, identification cards of many kinds, property and tax records, citizens rolls, city directories, and, more recently, such things as fingerprint files. The mechanics of citizenship, suffrage and justice depend upon this complex of records; when the community becomes too large for everyone to know everyone else, and when movement becomes free and easy these mechanics require record books and bits of paper with names, places and dates of birth, signatures and photographs. But for millions and millions of Africans the only evidence of name, age, marital condition and many other details is what the man or woman might say. Frequently, they do not actually know their age; in some tribes, people change their names from time to time for ritual reasons or from pure fancy. For some, marriage is poorly defined. Plural marriage was and is the custom, but a man sometimes is not too sure in all honesty whether he had formally married a given woman. In  
certain

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certain African tribes there is no positive relationship between marriage and paternity in the European sense. This does not mean that promiscuity reigns. Such matters are usually governed by codes and customs. An illustration is in order. A man goes to work in another country for two years. He returns to his home village with the profits of his work. His wife greets him with a new son only a few weeks old. He is very happy. His wife has done well by him in his absence; she has produced a son for him. The greatest basic desire of tribal Africans is to have sons.

Without attempting to impose social reforms on European standards, the French, nevertheless, have been compelled to introduce some kind of system which would: eventually serve to identify voters; provide official records to settle estate matters as the people increasingly acquired private property; assure pensions and social security benefits to those who earned them in the expanding industries, government services, and businesses; and for many other purposes, not the least of which are vital statistics on which to base public health and education programs.

Civil status records had been, since the 19th Century, kept in the four enfranchised communities of Gorée, Dakar, St. Louis and Rufisque of Senegal, but these records were significant only for those people who spent their lives in these cities, and few did. Vital data for Europeans, however, had been recorded by the administrateurs throughout the Federation, certificates issued,

certificates issued, and the records transmitted to the place of birth in France or elsewhere.

A decree of August 16, 1950 set up the machinery for recording civil status over as much as possible of FWA. Article I is significant:

**"Notifications - Reports:**

"... Declarations of birth and death of persons governed by local customs, and reports of marriages taking place according to local customs will be ascertained, received and registered in conformity with the provisions of this decree."

The decree provides great detail as to how the registrations are to be made, the records kept, and by whom. Considerable flexibility is allowed. In the cities and larger centers, the officials responsible for the records are easily designated. In the lesser places the recorder is "the Chef de Canton" (native district chief) or his secretary, or lacking such, an official serving in the locality.

In another way this "flexibility" is designed not to disturb tradition in the more primitive areas. There the tribal and lesser chiefs may report the births and deaths for their flocks. A further concession to tradition, and to the physical impossibility of making the new system work completely in such areas is that declarations of marriage are optional. However, the conclusion of any recorded marriage when<sup>er</sup> dissolved by death, divorce, or by any means recognized by local custom, must be reported.

**Analysis**

Analysis of the entire decree indicates that it is clearly intended to establish a policy and framework on which to build. It is now working in the cities and in some advanced areas. For the rest of the village and tribal centers it sets up the basic machinery available to all who want it. The decree makes possible universal registration of vital statistics and official records for the individuals, without further ado as soon as it becomes practical to install the administrative machinery and as soon as there is willingness to comply on the part of the entire population. In the meantime, villages, tribes and even individuals who see advantage in recorded civil status may have it upon application.

The various territorial governments and, in some cases the provincial administrators continually increase the coverage by designating new registration centers and appointing new officials in the outlying areas. The development of the registration system is now so fluid that statistics from it are not yet available. It was not expected that a complete functioning system with its procedures would be installed and perfected at once.



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B. PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT BY FRENCH AFRICANS  
SOUTH OF THE SAHARA

There are now no restrictions of any description on participation in any field of government activity by Black Africans or any other person who has citizenship in the French Republic. All Africans may vote in national as well as local elections, and all may aspire to any appointive, elective, civil service or military position, subject only to the usual democratic requirement of proving identity, obtaining enough votes, or passing the examinations.

Some writers on Black African affairs have interpreted the so-called "17 Categories" of voters to mean restrictions. Removed from the African environment for which it was intended, and quoted out of context, this list of 17 different ways by which an African may qualify as a voter may appear to be restrictive, for it includes such groups as "holders of hunting licenses" and "mothers of former or active soldiers".

The list is nothing more nor less than a means of identifying and registering potential voters, resorting to practically all existing forms of identification. In practice it permits more kinds of people to vote than do the rules used in some sections of the United States. For example, many States of the United States require literacy or even proof of school attendance as an absolute prerequisite for voting. There are still property requirements for certain types of elections in the United States, and in some States the poll tax is still a prerequisite

prerequisite to the exercise of the franchise. For the people of FWA and FEA literacy or proof of schooling is only one of the 17 ways by which a man or woman may prove identity and thus the right to register. The list is sufficiently broad that probably any illiterate person who has sufficient interest to do so can qualify in at least one of the ways to identify himself. Perhaps he will report his marriage or the birth of his son and thus acquire official identity. The list has no significance as concerns employment in a government activity, for anyone who can qualify in skill or ability for a government job will already have acquired civil identity.

The principle of direct participation of the local population in government in any French colony was first established on a limited scale by a royal "ordonnance" of September 1840, which created the "Conseil Général du Sénégal" at St. Louis. It was composed of ten Europeans of the city, and ten Africans elected by an "assembly of notables chosen from the inhabitants of St. Louis".\*

The "Conseil's attributes were consultative and financial." It was, however, abolished in 1848, but much valuable experience had been gained.

In 1849 Senegal was given direct representation in the French Parliament. This was withdrawn in 1855. A fresh start was made in 1879, when a new "Conseil Général" of sixteen members elected by direct universal suffrage was authorized. The voters were French citizens resident in the four enfranchized communities which included a great many Africans. This Conseil

\*Paris-Dakar, March 9, 1950, et. al.

Général

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\*Paris-Dakar, March 9, 1950, et. al.

Général was the final authority in all tax matters. It passed on the territorial budget and was thus in a position to determine some aspects of policy through its control over taxes and the budget. Little substantive change has been made in the form or authority of the Council since 1879 except to extend the field of suffrage and broaden its powers.

In 1879, also, Senegal resumed its direct and full representation in the French Parliament. Progress toward local participation in government in the other territories had been made in many small ways after that, but the war of 1940 put a stop to this as well as to almost everything else. The moral and ideological pressure that had been building up over centuries incubated during the war, to burst forth after the war was over in a rapid succession of decrees on details, and the Constitution of 1946 on principles.

The total result of all these laws, regulations and so forth permitted M. Letourneau, Minister of Overseas France to say in a speech at Abidjan on March 12, 1950: "You now have through your elected representatives the possibility of making yourselves heard on all matters which concern your territories in your national assemblies (in Paris and locally); you have the power to contribute to the administration of national affairs . . .

"There is no difference between the sons of France born in these latitudes and those born in that sacred hexagon which is France. ... Each one ... can contribute to the general management of the affairs of his territory, of France and of the French Union."

#### Parliamentary Representation

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Parliamentary Representation

The Constitution of the Fourth Republic of October 27, 1946, in creating the French Union provided for various legislative and consultative bodies on which sit elected representatives from the Overseas<sup>and Associated</sup> Territories, as well as from Metropolitan France.

In addition to reaffirming the Conseil de la République and the Assemblée Nationale as constituting the Parliament of the French Republic, the Constitution of 1946 created a new consultative union-wide body of parliamentary character for the French Union. It is: "L'Assemblée de l'Union Française" which met for the first time on December 10, 1947 at Versailles. Its original membership consisted of 75 representatives from Metropolitan France, elected by the two National Houses of Parliament, and 75 representatives from the Overseas Territories and other members of the Union chosen by the various assemblies or "Conseils" of the Territories. The total representation was later changed to 102 and 102. Twenty-seven of these represent the territories of French West Africa and seven represent French Equatorial Africa. This body must be consulted by the Metropolitan Government or Parliament on certain matters, particularly those questions concerning matters beyond the borders of Metropolitan France. Conversely, the Assembly of the Union may initiative advice or recommendations to the Metropolitan Government or Parliament.

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is expected that based on further experience, decrees will, in time, be issued to clarify these powers and functions.

The former colony of Senegal had been represented before 1946 by one member each in the former Assemblée Nationale and the Conseil de la République. The other colonies of FWA and FEA were not represented, nor were the Federations as such. Under the New Constitution the category of "colony" was abolished and each of these, in FWA and FEA, then became a Territory in the French Republic and entitled to representation in the Parliament of the Republic.

In the two houses of Parliament in Paris, French West Africa is now represented by 20 Deputies in the "Assemblée Nationale" (House of Representatives) elected by universal suffrage at the rate of one Deputy for each 800,000 population, and twenty Senators in the "Conseil de la République", elected by the local Parliament in each territory.

The representation of the Overseas and Associated Territories of French Black Africa in the Metropolitan and Union Parliamentary bodies is as follows:

<u>Overseas Territories</u>	<u>Assemblée Nationale Deputies</u>	<u>Conseil de la République - Senators</u>	<u>Assemblée de l'Union Française- Conseillers</u>
<u>F.W.A.</u>			
Mauretania	1	1	1
Senegal	2	3	3
Upper Volta	4	3	5
Soudan	4	4	5
Ivory Coast	2	3	4
French Guinea	3	2	4
French Niger	2	2	3
Dahomey	2	2	2
	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>27</u>

<u>Overseas Territories</u>	<u>Assemblée Nationale Deputies</u>	<u>Conseil de la Répub- lique - Senators</u>	<u>Assemblée de l'Union Française- Conseillers</u>
<u>FEA</u>			
Chad } 1	1	3	3
Ubangi-Shari )	1	2	2
Gaboon } 1	1	1	1
Middle Congo )	$\frac{1}{6}$	$\frac{2}{8}$	$\frac{1}{7}$
<u>Associated Territories (Trusteeships)</u>			
Cameroons	3	3	5
Togoland	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{2}{6}$	$\frac{1}{6}$

It is to be noted that the Federations of FWA with Dakar as its capital, and FEA with Brazzaville as its capital, as such, are not represented. It is each member territory of the Federations which is represented. Approximately three-fourths or more of the various representatives listed above are Africans and some are Eurafriicans. Exact figures for racial distribution cannot be given because this information is not a matter of record anywhere.

Below the Union level, the elective parliamentary organization in French West Africa is composed of:

1. The "Grand Conseil" of the Federation, which meets at Dakar. It was created by the law of August 29, 1947, under authority of the Constitution of October 27, 1946. Its members, called Senators, five from each territory, are elected by the General Council (Conseil Général) of each territory. Only "Conseillers Généraux" who are members of the territorial General Councils are eligible for election. The powers of the Grand Conseil are limited to tax, financial and administrative matters. It does not legislate beyond these three areas just mentioned, but is empowered to give its advice to the Federation



the Federation Government on any subject concerning the relations of the territories to each other or the interests of the Federation as a whole.

2. The "Conseil Général". Each Territory<sup>ony</sup> has a semi-legislative body called the Conseil General (General Council) composed of from 20 to 50 members, depending on the population and the constitutional provisions of the Territory. The members are "Conseillers Généraux" and are elected, ostensibly, by universal suffrage. Although all the members of the Conseils Généraux have the same status, they are still elected in some of the territories by a process which is a hangover from the former colonial days. That process is known as the "Two Colleges" by which the European and French citizen residents of a territory elected a certain number of Conseillers Généraux and the African citizens of the territory elected a certain number. Although not in direct proportion, the number of seats allotted to the African suffrage has been somewhat greater than those allotted to the Europeans--and the men elected have not always followed the racial line of the electorate. With the emergence of "French Citizens" on a broad scale the system of "two colleges" is being gradually revised in favor of true, universal suffrage.

#### Elections and Political Parties

The first national election held in FWA under the citizenship and suffrage provisions of the Constitution of the Fourth Republic and related decrees took place late in 1946. Outside of Senegal the whole process was too new to be effective in a democratic

democratic manner. Only about 750,000 registered to vote out of 17 million population, and, except in Senegal, the only organized political party activity available to the new citizens was the Communist inspired RDA. With very few votes to control, the RDA placed a good number of men in office.

The vast majority of the inhabitants of FWA had had absolutely no consciousness or experience in political affairs of the European or American type. For many of the people living in the "Bush" there is some question as to whether consciousness as individuals had been developed.

By the time of the next, and latest, national election, June 17, 1951,\* enormous strides had been made. At that time, political consciousness and participation in party politics by the natives had reached the point where there were approximately forty active political parties and ninety-eight candidates for the twenty seats allocated to French West Africa in the French National Assembly. Political party activity of a healthy, democratic nature broke out in many parts of the Federation. Of the forty parties in FWA a few were national and worked in all or nearly all the territories, and some were local; and some of the local parties are not completely independent of each other or of Metropolitan political parties. A national party in one territory frequently bears a name different from one in another territory, or in the Metropole, with which it is affiliated, and whether they are actually equivalent

\* There have been only a few local but no national elections between 1951 and June 1954.

equivalent is open to question for each territorial party has a certain amount of individuality. The majority of the parties are of local African inspiration, and with few exceptions the candidates put up by them are native Africans. There is no official recognition nor are there any statistics as to whether or not a candidate is European or African. Some predominantly African parties have supported White European candidates, and African candidates have received the support of predominantly European parties.

In the interval between 1946 and 1951 high policy in Paris and Dakar at first encouraged French political party organizers to go to FWA to organize the multi-party system. The Administration soon decided that this policy had many serious defects and so most of the organizers returned to France. It then encouraged the formation of parties on a spontaneous basis, sometimes with the participation, guidance and counsel of such Europeans as were bona fide residents of FWA. Compared with the 700,000 registrations for voting in 1946, the figures for the elections of June 17, 1951 are highly significant:

For June 17, 1951

Ivory Coast	163,057
Dahomey	334,435
Upper Volta	332,989
Guinea	417,895
Mauritania	136,775
Niger	92-000
Senegal	661,973
Soudan	922,628
TOTAL	3,081,750

The high proportion of registration was remarkable when one considers the illiteracy and primitiveness prevailing in much

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much of French West Africa. Commentators at the time, whether they agreed with the results or not, generally expressed satisfaction with the evidence that the population as a whole was able, and did, express its will in a democratic manner.

In certain cases, where the civil administration officials had stepped over the line to campaign for candidates they favored, the men, who in some instances were the incumbents, were defeated. An unexpected but very interesting result of the election according to local comment at the time is the apparent rejection by the voters of the idea that the administration could mix in party politics. The officials responsible for playing local politics found their standing with the local population somewhat deteriorated and some of them soon left FWA.

It is clear that, for the first time, the native population of FWA had participated in a full scale election with all the features of democratic procedure such as: (1) extensive suffrage (not, perhaps, universal suffrage, largely because no way has yet been found to identify, register and acquaint with the issues some of the more primitive, illiterate peoples); (2) plenty of political parties of both local and metropolitan origin; (3) freedom of expression and discussion of issues.

In summary, it can perhaps be said that the native population of FWA has now been well initiated in the processes of participation in parliamentary government, and in the intricacies of expressing their will by fairly orderly voting. The political errors made in the election of 1951 are now widely known and it is possible that future elections will be decided by the mass of the population and that the individual voter, now that he has learned of his power, will assert himself more freely.

### C. INTEGRATION OF AFRICANS INTO THE GOVERNMENT SERVICES

M. Letourneau's statement of March 12, 1950, that "each one ... can contribute to the general management of the affairs of his territory, of France and of the French Union", means that not only may each one express himself by engaging in the selection of his legislative representatives, but also that Africans may participate in any governmental or administrative activity at any level.

For a great many years, before that time, men of the Black races from Senegal, Martinique, Guadeloupe and French ~~Guiana~~ have occupied positions of the highest responsibility, in FWA as well as in Metropolitan France. Among the most significant positions thus held were: Under Secretary of State for Colonies; Governor General of French Equatorial Africa; Governor of Senegal; Mayor of Dakar; and President of the French Senate (Conseil de la République)

With the extension of citizenship to the inhabitants of all the territories, it is now the declared policy of the Government, national, federal, and territorial, to absorb citizens of African origin into the government services, and as fast as individuals can meet the normal standards for the various positions. The purpose here is not to exclude Europeans from government work in Africa or elsewhere, but rather to permit full participation of all citizens regardless of origin in the common work on a basis of equality.

This policy was considered to be the intent of the Constitution of 1946, and to be consistent with many earlier laws affecting

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affecting those Africans who had acquired French citizenship before 1946.

There was, however, a hiatus from 1946 to 1950 in the establishment of the policy. At various times before 1946 laws and regulations had made no distinction of race or place of origin of French citizens in holding government positions or in the pay and allowances they were to receive. At other times there were differences in pay and perquisites for Europeans and Africans in certain types of jobs. The rules changed frequently, but the matter was not very serious as less than two per cent of the administrative and technical personnel in FWA were Africans and many of these "came under the same system as anyone else--and for some it was for more than a century".\*

Among all the decrees, laws and rules introducing citizenship, equality and so forth of 1946 and later, the decrees concerning government employment were curious indeed. A series of them provided that: "Only European officials may take their periodical leave in the Metropole", but permitting special authorization if the spouse were European; family allowances apply only to officials of "European origin or ancestry"; extra pay and allowances for duty "outside the country of origin apply only to Europeans."

These decrees were a hard blow to numbers of Africans who had by then attained responsible, respected position in the administration,

\* See African edited newspaper  
L'A.O.F., Dakar May 16-31, 1950  
for full history.

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in the administration, education, medicine, justice and many other services, not to mention European standards of living befitting their attainments.

Except for those Africans who were elected to high public office or who had obtained the highest professional positions, the mechanics of selection, description of duties, pay and perquisites for the increasing numbers of Africans presented many problems. The Europeans who had been brought from France for the same job had required more pay and allowances than the Africans were thought to need. Numerous attempts were made to meet the situation by palliative action, and in some instances by compromise. Because of all the other principles and policies which abolished consideration of racial differences or place of birth for determining status, it became increasingly difficult to operate these formulae or to justify them to the old and new citizens following 1946. The older citizen African failed to see why his "take home pay" should be reduced below that of his European colleague simply because all the rest of the Africans were now French citizens; and the young African aspirant had doubts of his own.

The entire question was sweepingly settled by Law No. 50-772 of June 30, 1950 of the French Republic. This law is commonly referred to as "The Lamine Gueye Law" after its sponsor in the French Parliament.\* This law provides in part:

Art. 1

\* M. Lamine Gueye is an African of Senegal. He completed his education in France and became a lawyer. He was elected Mayor of Dakar in 1945 and Deputy for Senegal in the National Assembly in Paris before World War II. He has held both positions simultaneously, which is possible under the French system.

Art. 1. ". . . the pay and appurtenances of whatever nature applicable to civil and military personnel serving in the territories under the general supervision of the Ministry of Overseas France shall in no case be based on differences of race, personal status, origin, or place of recruitment."

(In this and succeeding Articles, differences in extra compensation, leave of absence, et cetera, are provided for on the basis of place of duty.)

Art. 2 provides for special allowances and payments to the civil servant who is required to serve "outside the Metropole, or the country or the territory where he habitually resides". There is a similar provision for military personnel.

Art. 3. "The conditions for entrance, recruitment and advancement shall be the object of identical regulations for all civil servants in the same line of activity."

There would seem to be little further to discuss on this subject until the law has been in operation for a few more years, and any necessary mechanical procedures have been developed.



#### D. FRENCH JUSTICE FOR AFRICANS

Since the 16th Century, the French had been discussing, writing and planning ways and means for giving the inhabitants of their tropical African areas of influence the benefits of their form of jurisprudence. The declaration of the Parliament of Bordeaux in 1571 and subsequent decrees, laws, and statements of principles regarding slavery, et cetera, all had their influence in preparing the mental climate which produced the series of decrees and laws promulgated after 1821. The decree of 1848 which emancipated all the slaves on French territory, conferred upon those slaves freed on Gorée and at St. Louis, the capital of Senegal, full French citizenship and entitled them to the rights and privileges provided by French jurisprudence. It is certain, however, that the mechanics for handling legal matters for the new Black citizens did not become available at that time as suddenly as did their citizenship.

The French were, of course, certain that their system of justice was the best in the world. The varying virtues of English common law and the Code Napoléon are well known and debatable, but either system is a striking improvement over the cruel and arbitrary traditional Black African justice which relied partly on omens, black magic and test by poison for evidence, and often on bizarre torture for punishment.

The systems, codes and organization of justice developed after 1822 became known as : "Justice Indigène" (Native Justice).

This was

This was in effect official recognition and codification to some extent of established traditional justice as practiced among the multitudes of tribes and other ethnic groups. It gave recognition to any fundamental differences of practice among the various groups. For example, Moslem law had been provided for since 1857 by three special Moslem tribunals and later by special arrangements for the use of Moslem law in the Court of Appeals at Dakar.\* "Justice Indigène" tempered some of the more repulsive practices and punishment through the application of some simplified European procedures, such as substituting human witnesses for animal and inanimate portents. The Administrators were trained in native law at the National School of Overseas France, and a network of courts competent to handle native law gradually spread over the land. The lower of these courts, or tribunals, were presided over by designated chiefs, local notables, and in certain cases by the local "Commandant de Cercle" or his assistant. For the higher courts operating under "Justice Indigène", there were full time professional officials of the Judiciary Services, both European and African.

Formal French legal procedures were introduced in West Africa when a Court of Appeal was established at Dakar in 1903.

Before 1946, French jurisprudence was mandatory for Europeans and such Africans of Senegal who were full French citizens. By that time French justice was applied, or made optional, depending upon the category of the law, to about a hundred thousand

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\* 1903-

hundred thousand Africans, citizens of the four "fully enfranchized" communities in Senegal. In spite of efforts to make French justice "available" to those who might want it elsewhere, little had been done to provide the machinery for this purpose.

According to the Chief of the Judiciary Services:

"Article 80 of the Constitution (of 1946) having accorded the right of French citizenship to all the French nationals of our overseas territories, it became necessary from that moment to envisage a profound reform of native justice. Earlier in that year, a decree of April 30, 1946 had abolished "Native Justice" as concerned penal matters."\*

The Constitution, being more concerned with principles, was interpreted as not being specific as to the moment of change; but the decree had left no choice, French justice in penal matters was immediately applicable to all. Therefore, the abolishing of those branches of Justice which were not covered by the specific decree of April 20, was deferred until practical measures could be taken for providing the needed new personnel, developing interpretations, instructing existing personnel and so forth, not the least of which was the necessity to tell the population what the change was all about.

"Native Justice" was, therefore, retained "in civil and commercial matters concerning natives who, prior to April 20, 1946, did not have the character of French citizens".\*\*

The extension of French civil law throughout the Federation was officially set in motion/<sup>three years later</sup> by a legislative decree of

August 20, 1949,

\* H. Laborde, Chief of Judiciary Services in the Ministry of Overseas France, Enqyl. A.O.F., Vol. I, p. 265.  
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August 20, 1949. This later decree provided for twenty-seven "Justices de Paix"\* "with broad powers, identical to those of the tribunals of first instance of the Metropole"\*\* but lacking some of the auxiliary court officers and financial provisions of the latter.

Whatever the timetable of implementation, the Constitution and the decree of 1946 suddenly increased the jurisdiction of French courts and law in Black Africa from a hundred thousand people to seventeen or more million in FWA or possibly even twenty-five million including French Equatorial Africa. It is interesting to note, again, that Native Africans were among those who drafted the Constitution as elected legislators from FWA.

In 1946 this rapid changeover presented a very serious and urgent problem, particularly as concerned the immediate use of French Penal law, for the majority of the court officials and lawyers throughout FWA had had no experience in administering French law, certainly not in so far as Africans and their special mentality and customs were concerned. Many of them, including most of the "Administrateurs" had had no instruction

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\* The French Justice de Paix is not to be confused with the American Justice of the Peace. The French "Justice" is the Court and the French "Juge de Paix" has greater authority than the American Justice of the Peace.

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instruction or training in European French law. The majority of the provincial administrators, in the absence of any type of established French courts of law, suddenly became judges and their offices became courtrooms for the administration of French penal law. Jails and prisons had to be expanded as incarceration took the place of more exotic forms of punishment.

There was some danger of anarchy for a brief period, but the district administrators fortunately were able to maintain law and order, often in ingenious and imaginative ways until new courts and adaptations of French law could be established. Since 1946, the Justice Department of the FWA government, with the assistance of experienced administrators, has devoted itself energetically to the task of drafting interpretations and procedures that could be applied to conditions found in West Africa. Magistrates had to be found and trained and, above all, experience was needed and had to be sought in practice.

These efforts have continued and the machinery of justice is still not completely functioning.

The first impact of the new status had its unpredictable, unpremeditated, if not always amusing, side. Under the old native law the penalty for theft, under certain conditions

conditions, was amputation of one hand; the penalty for the second offense was amputation of the other hand; the third offense called for the head or the feet. After a second offense it was considered that the culprit was unlikely to do any more stealing. There were, in fact, very few thefts. After April 30, 1946, the penalty for theft could only be some days in prison. Stealing became very popular. Many committed theft merely for the purpose of being able to spend a few days in prison, food and lodging free, out of touch with their hungry relations and in a position to give free rein to their allergy to work. The administrators had to improve methods of making jail life distasteful. Prisoners now perform some of the lesser tasks formerly done by compulsory labor, such as carrying water from water sources to the offices and homes of officials and doing construction and maintenance work for the administrators.

The administration of justice is intended to be a careful blend of the French code, of native custom, and of the Koranic law, where it applies. Whatever the Constitution of 1946 may say, or the status of French citizenship may imply, certain phases of civil law <sup>are</sup> being left carefully alone.

Marriage and divorce, tribal and individual property rights, and non-criminal <sup>tribal</sup> litigation, <sup>may be</sup> practiced according to <sup>the</sup> local variety of Animist or tribal law and custom, or in — Moslem communities, by Koranic law. The native, however, may choose French law if he desires, ~~as well as~~ <sup>as</sup> well as the simplified divorce

divorce of the Moslem and Animist codes are permitted. The determination of property rights outside of the cities or their immediate vicinities are left largely to the tribal leaders. Litigations on civil matters are supposed to be tried before the local administrators, or Juge de Paix, but many of these cases in the more remote areas are handled by the native tribal or religious leader.

Ever since the judicial reforms of 1946 were set in motion, there has been considerable debate concerning the wisdom of the instantaneous nature of the change. "Proponents" of the reform proclaimed:---

"that democratic progress required that Africa (French) should have a judicial system identical with that of France; that it was intolerable that the African citizens should still be submitted to the jurisdiction of the 'Administrateur' or the traditional Chief. By a stroke of the pen, everything was put in order by suppressing traditions and replacing them with the perfected, but, oh! so complicated apparatus of republican justice.

"Those who knew Africa cried 'death trap'. They declared that the Blacks preferred the justice which respected their customs to the dilatoriness and complications of the French tribunals.

"It was necessary to make some adjustments in the 'Code': the provisions concerning bigamy were omitted, for the inalienable right of the voter (or of the future voter) was to buy a wife each month if he had the means. Some years later, the means were given him by the Lamine Gueye law which provided for family allowances (on the European scale). On the other hand there was added to the 'Code' the offense of cannibalism; and magistrates were rushed into the 'bush'...

"The first result was an increase in the budget for justice. In French Equatorial Africa it was 25 million francs (CFA) in 1949. In 1953 it has become 273 million . . ."

"Cote d'Ivoire", Abidjan, Jan. 15, 1954.

## FRENCH POLICY IN WEST AFRICA AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

II. "POINT IV" a la FRANCAISE

Planning, financing and personnel were necessary to make effective the broad policy in the Preamble of the Constitution concerning "nations and people who wish to place in common or coordinate their resources and efforts in order to develop their civilization, increase their well being and ensure their security".

Two organisms were created to plan, finance and carry out this policy. The first, known as FIDES (fee-dess) created, in fact, six months before the Constitution of 1946, was designed to provide for large scale economic and social development of maximum general benefit. The second, known as FERDES (fur-dess) created three years later in 1949, was to provide for the small projects of local interest but essential to the larger plans.

The idea of an over-all plan to bring order out of the economic and social chaos which resulted from the world war conditions, and, more than that, to take advantage of the chaos by starting afresh with long range, balanced plans for the Overseas Territories, had been forming in the minds of men during the war. Some of them were colonial "Administrateurs" and statesmen isolated in Paris; others were the men confined to their jobs in Africa, cut off from the Ministries, exchange of ideas, guidance, and finances of Paris.

As the idea

As the idea took form these men realized that it was necessary to develop the non-revenue producing substructure of social activities along with the plans for straight economic improvements; that the improvement on a solid and costly basis of education, health and sanitation and other social relationships must be carried on simultaneously with the development of basic facilities and industry.

They realized that trained and experienced personnel from Europe must be sent to the Overseas Territories on a vastly greater scale than formerly to plan and carry out activities aimed at improving the social conditions in a manner that would produce trained African groups capable of eventually carrying on and extending the work without direct continued assistance from the Metropole.

In proposing to ship technical personnel to Black Africa, the French authorities realized that lasting real improvement in local African conditions could come only through the transfer of technical knowledge, or as the "Point-4" people say: "Know-how". They also realized that ways must be found to make sure that the Africans would understand and absorb the "know-how" and that it would be effective under African conditions. For this there was great need for more scientific information as to what Africa and its peoples are and what they were and were not capable of doing; there were many legends to dispel. Hence the decision was made that substantial proportions of the development funds and effort must be provided for social services and research.

The idea

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The idea was reduced to the terms of a fundamental law, before the Constitution was finally adopted. that of April 30, 1946, by the Parliament in Paris, This law and some other territories, applied to all the French Overseas Territories, except North Africa. It created the vast, complex organization now known as FIDES, "Fonds d'Investissement pour le Developpement Economique et Social des Territoires d'Outre-Mer (Investment Fund for the Development of the Overseas Territories). The purpose, organization and financing of FIDES would require several pages to describe with any clarity.\* They are all very complex. The purposes are what the title suggests. There is, of course, provision for an elaborate system of analysis and screening to make sure that any proposal is rational and actually will contribute to the economic or the social development of the Territories.

The administrative organization is a part of the Ministry of Overseas France, but the work draws on participation and advice of other ministries and of the legislative bodies of France and participating territories. All elements participate in the financing, but the formula differs with the territory and the type of activity. The Mother Country provides basic capital; the territories contribute funds to the general capital or borrow their share from the "Caisse Centrale", the central Bank of the French Union which holds the Metropolitan and certain other contributions of capital.

The Caisse Centrale also subscribes the capital for certain approved state corporations and mixed capital companies, and makes loans to them.

The formulae

\*The summary description of FIDES activities is a book of 209 double column pages: "L'Equipement de l'A.O.F.", as of July 1, 1950.\*

The formulae of disbursement provide in brief that: scientific research will be covered 100 per cent by the basic FIDES funds; social development projects may draw 66 per cent or even more directly from FIDES funds and the rest from whatever sources are concerned; economic development may be financed up to 50 per cent by FIDES funds, and any needed additional capital not covered by private investment or local budgets may be borrowed from the local territorial Caisse Centrale.

A list of the active organizations created or enlarged with FIDES assistance would also require pages. Suffice it to mention a very few:

A. With full FIDES financing and sponsorship are:

1. Office de la Recherche Scientifique Coloniale (ORSC) is designed to orient and coordinate all research. It now has or assists research and training stations in many subjects in many places. A primary function of the ORSC is to supply trained researchers from the Metropole and to train local Africans in procedures and goals.
2. Construction and maintenance of certain port, road, rail, dam, hospital, school and technical institutes, et cetera, including the training of local personnel which are considered to be vital to development, but beyond the current ability of private or local interests to finance or operate.

B. FIDES

- B. FIDES participates with private interests and capital in projects that have commercial possibilities, such as these:
1. Compagnie Generale des Oleagineux Tropicaux (CGOT) now engaged in increasing the production of vegetable oils for export.
  2. La Compagnie des Textiles de l'Union Francaise for the development of tropical fibers.
  3. Electric power companies for industrial as well as domestic use.
- C. FIDES financing assists older, established organizations of research and economic development, notably:
1. The Pasteur Institutes
  2. Institut Francais d'Afrique Noir (IFAN) in its work on the Sciences of Man, zoology, botany and physical geography.

For all the FIDES projects of economic and social aid and technical assistance, more than a half billion dollars (in francs) were used in French Black Africa from 1949 to 1952.

FIDES--Funds allotted to Development Plans in the Overseas Territories, most of which are in Africa South of the Sahara, for 1949 to 1952.  
(in millions of U.S. Dollars arbitrarily converted at the 1952 exchange rate)

For Development Within Territories:

	<u>FWA</u>	<u>FEA</u>	<u>Cameroons</u>	<u>Mada- gascar</u>	<u>All Other</u>	<u>Total Terr.</u>
1. Production and Power	58.	18.	10.	8.	8.	97.
2. Public Works	141.	69.	59.	35.	21.	325.
3. Public Health, Edu-	40.	14.	9.	8.	17.	88.
4. <del>Research &amp; Housing</del>	<u>0.3</u>	<u>0.3</u>	<u>0.6</u>	<u>0.6</u>	<u>1.</u>	<u>2.8</u>
5. Total	239.3	96.3	78.6	51.6	47.	512.8



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## Funds Allotted to Projects of General Interest:

	<u>FIDES- General</u>	<u>Other Loans</u>	<u>Total General</u>	<u>Total of Terri- torial &amp; Gen.</u>
1. Production & Power	39.	59.	98.	195.
2. Public Works	9.	31.	40.	365.
3. Public Health, Edu- cation & Housing	6.	--	6.	94.
4. Research & Other	<u>43.</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>43.</u>	<u>45.8</u>
5. Total	<u>97.</u>	<u>90.</u>	<u>187.</u>	<u>699.8</u>

It must be borne in mind that FWA is composed of eight territories and FEA of four. The total figures for each of the two Federations are used here for the purpose of simplicity.

The funds listed under "General" are for those activities which are of benefit to more than one territory or are conducted outside the territory concerned, such as: Improvement of inter-territorial railroads and roads; contracts for engineering plans of general interest; higher education facilities; scientific research of general interest.

Each territory's share of the "General Funds" may be said to be roughly in proportion to the funds shown in the first table. Actually, a higher proportion of the funds are used in FWA because of its more advanced existing research facilities.

These figures do not include money appropriated by the Federations, Territories and communities for the operation and improvement of many of the existing schools, health services and other established activities. Nor do these figures include funds for use in other parts of the French Union, such as Associated ~~States~~ and States.

When the Marshall Plan and the United States Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) came on the scene in 1948, FIDES was

FIDES was already organized and in a position to take advantage of the large scale opportunities offered by ECA. At about this time it became apparent to the French authorities that there were many important, but small efforts, absolutely essential to the rational development of the territories, which would not benefit from either FIDES or ECA because of the rules and precepts which governed these agencies.

As has been said so often in West Africa, industrialization, large scale transportation improvements and the like, had been of little real benefit because the countless small "grass roots" facilities, skills and supplies were lacking. These necessities have been taken for granted in Europe and America, but without them in Africa many great and costly schemes have already failed. For this reason much of the Marshall Plan equipment today lies rusting in French West and Equatorial Africa without ever having been used. These were the things too insignificant in themselves to gain the attention of FIDES or the Marshall Plan, but which altogether were beyond the capacity of the local communities to handle without guidance and financial help; such things as the rural schools and dispensaries, water wells, access roads and bridges, market places, slaughter houses, simple installations for preparing agricultural products for better use or for shipment, and training in the basic manual skills.

In order to meet these primordial needs, to begin at the beginning and lay the elementary groundwork for development, FERDES was created by a decree of March 23, 1949 (Fonds d'Équipement Rural et de Développement Économique et Social--Funds for Rural

for Rural Equipment and for Economic and Social Development).  
 FERDES has now acquired the common name of "Genie Rural" --  
 Rural Engineering. In French this is a delightful play on  
 words, for Genie also means Guardian Spirit, or the Genie of  
 the Arabian Nights. Works are financed as follows:

One-third (as a minimum) by the requesting community  
 which is to benefit from the project.

One-third by the local budget (territory or province).

One-third by the Federal Budget (of FWA).

No one project may exceed 15 million CFA (\$85,700) in  
 total cost.

The community (tribe, village, or group) requesting the  
 project undertakes to sustain at least the first third of the  
 total cost, which may be in either money or work.

The project is reviewed by appropriate officials and  
 technicians and is submitted to the permanent commission of  
 the territorial Assembly for approval.

This procedure is highly significant as a step in the  
 implementation of French Policy in Black Africa. For this  
 formula of 1949 places the initiative for certain economic  
 and social development upon the people who expect to benefit  
 from it; and after technical review, the judgment for approval  
 rests in organisms of their own elected representatives.  
 Neither Paris, nor the Federal capital, Dakar, can propose,  
 question, or alter these development projects.

The development activities under FERDES in Ivory Coast  
 indicate how the system is working out.\*

~~FERDES is a development organization which is~~  
~~operating in the Ivory Coast and is a part of the~~  
~~French development program in the Ivory Coast.~~

\* Since FERDES operates within each territory,  
 reports from all eight territories are not  
 available, and when available are not in same form.

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By July 1, 1953, 135 projects in Ivory Coast had been completed or started as follows:

1. Rural schools \$440,000 (dollar equivalent)
2. Rural roads, bridges and boat landings \$380,000
3. Markets and slaughter houses \$200,000
4. Structures for storing and preparing products \$160,000
5. Wells, sources and distribution of water \$140,000
6. Rural dispensaries \$94,000
7. Improvement of land, dams, rice fields, etc. \$52,000

The FIDES and other over-all development activities, of course, use much larger sums of money.

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## V. FRENCH ECONOMIC POLICY TOWARD BLACK AFRICA

The history of economic policy in French West Africa falls into two entirely distinctive eras separated by the hiatus of World War II. Before that conflict French West Africa could be called an era of colonial exploitation in the sense that raw products and materials were taken out of it and very little of an economic nature was put in except for investments concerned with moving products and preparing them for shipment. French government policy during that period can be said to have been limited to the installation and support of transportation and communication facilities, and there was little encouragement for private interests to engage in anything more than trading, extraction and a little planting. During and following World War II, policies were developed in economic fields where there had been none before. At that time the new concept of developing from within instead of exploiting from without was definitely introduced into the economy of French West Africa. This policy brought with it many new features including a White European "Petite Bourgeoisie", industrial production and processing for local use and export, and the abolishing of "Forced Labor". In implementation of the new policies, financial and technical organizations were set up to assure the necessary capital investments and furnish the "know how".

Apart from the mineral possibilities, the external economy of FWA has depended and continues to depend upon a very limited number

number of cash crops or products; extremely limited when compared with the great area and hypothetical, but unproven, potentialities of the Federation.

Traditionally, West Africa has been a supplier of raw materials, notably, oleaginous nuts for the oil mills of France; some rare woods; some tropical fruits, cacao and coffee; and very small amounts of minerals. Before World War II all these products were shipped with only elementary processing or with none at all; there was no industry as the word is understood in Europe and America. During the war, the necessity to supply the allied countries with basic raw materials forced the intensification of production of certain products, notably oil nuts and the processing of them before shipment in order to save shipping space. By the same token, the disappearance of European sources for manufactured goods, after 1939, induced the making of some simple necessities locally. As time went on, the plants set up to meet the most pressing needs in FWA were enlarged and improved and new ones were added. More important, the experience gained in this period coupled with the continued shortages in the immediate post-war period produced enthusiasm not only for the setting up of processing plants, but also for the creation of a more balanced economy. In brief, the pre-war economy of simple exploitation conducted by planters and trading houses has now come to an end.

This shift

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This shift in emphasis in the economy of FWA from 1940 to approximately 1950 was undoubtedly forced by circumstances. Before that period, during it, and since then, the policy concerning trade and commerce has generally been that of freedom of competitive enterprise. There are no outright prohibitions against anyone, European or African, setting up any business activity or trade, within morally acceptable limits.

In import matters the policy has generally inclined toward free trade. For periods of time there have been no preferential import duties, and at times, in the past, no duties at all. For example, the customs duties from 1940 to 1951 were non-preferential and were for revenue only. The present import duties can be said to be modest in scale and although giving French Union preference, are not prohibitive for products of other countries. Such restrictions as there are on imports are based on foreign exchange availability, apportioned according to the need of the commodity; if no scarce foreign exchange is required to make the import, no control is imposed.

Trade and commerce within the Federations are free. Except in government-subsidized development projects such as the "Office du Niger", the farmer or producer may sell to whom he may believe gives him the best price or return, and the considerable number of trading houses are competitive. In general, no one purchasing or selling house has a monopoly in any one market area.

The Government

The Government does, however, regulate the times at which trading in the major cash crops may begin. This is considered to be a protective device to discourage farmers from harvesting their crops before they are marketable or ripe, and to prevent traders from making usurious loans in advance of harvest time.

The Government in certain cases guarantees minimum prices as a protection against low world market prices which would place the farmer below the subsistence level to which he has been accustomed.

What the French are doing with the economy of Black Africa is much the same as is being done by other guardian powers.

In the past, all African territories were regarded as areas of exploitation for the benefit of the nationals of the respective colonial powers. Today this approach has been virtually eliminated in the greater part of Black Africa. For example, the Land Alienation laws of the British colonies forbid ownership of agricultural lands by Europeans, and various French laws assure native priority in ownership and use of land. The French protect free competition and the British maintain marketing boards, both for the same purpose. With these and many other new concepts having to do with the dignity and well-being of man, there is a reversal of the old exploitation concept.

#### Labor

As with the resources and products of the land, labor was, before 1946, a resource subject to exploitation. It was in effect



was in effect a commodity which could be used to build and maintain roads, to construct public works, and, under certain conditions, to man plantations and work shops, whether European or African owned, by the simple process of conscription. Local chieftains were required to furnish so many man-days of labor as a form of taxation; and some of the men conscripted for military service were assigned to labor battalions instead of to military units.

Decrees of 1946, in the spirit of the Constitution changed all that. All forms of compulsory or forced labor were abolished. Labor suddenly ceased to be an economic resource or commodity and became a social matter. Labor will be discussed further in the Chapter on Social Policy.

#### Policy Objectives

M. Paul Bechard, High Commissioner of the French Republic for FWA, in a speech at the opening of the Grand Council of FWA, October 3, 1950, described in detail "The Economic Objectives" of Policy of Post War II France in West Africa.

This policy, he stated, is based on the premise that all true social progress is founded on economic development. Unless the first steps toward economic means are taken, there can be no lasting improvement of human conditions. He explained his thesis as follows:

"The prime objectives of French Policy for West Africa must be the improvement and protection of the essential factors in the internal development of these territories.

"First must come production which is the basis for exportation; then must come industry which makes possible the development of internal trade. To promote this development, there must be created a road and rail network, ports and airfields on one side, and sources of energy on the other. These are the real arteries and propulsive centers of the economy.

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"This substructure, which involves enormous capital investment can only be accomplished through public financing, with little hope of immediate or early direct financial return. Thus will be created the essential tools for the development of new sources of riches, frequently unforeseen. But the simple transfusion of capital cannot raise the standard of living; this requires the strenuous efforts and cooperation of the entire body of workers.

"Although agriculture is now the foundation of African economy, it should be coupled with a parallel industrial effort. It is essential to build up local industries, such as cement, lime, brick, assembly plants, et cetera, rather than bring these elements in from outside at enormous cost, often twenty to thirty times their value at point of origin, especially to those regions far from seaports. Processing industries also must be installed to extract from raw products the commercially exportable ingredient. These industries will permit a competitive and marketable value to be placed on produce by reducing the heavy freight charges, and relieve the pressure which saturates the road and rail networks, and the ports.

"The simultaneous development of agricultural production and the creation of processing industries will provide the foundation for social progress and raise the standards of living of the West African people which is the supreme objective of the French Government."

This formula of policy pronounced by M. Bechard in 1950 had by the end of 1953 attained its most substantial success in Ivory Coast, although internal surface transportation still is highly inadequate in this and all other territories of FWA. A brief inventory of the new industries to be found in Ivory Coast since 1946, compared with the pre-World War II industries, clearly shows how that policy has been implemented.

In this inventory only industries of some magnitude will be mentioned. There were before the war many small work shops and plants, garages, brick plants, small rice mills and others, but which were and still are at the artisan level in equipment and techniques.

and techniques. These have multiplied enormously since 1946.

Before World War II, there were only three industrial activities worthy of the name. In line with the new policy of 1946 each of these was considerably expanded and improved. These were:

Spinning Mill. Gonfréville at Bouaké, founded in 1922 on a modest scale as the first real industry in the territory, or in FWA outside of Dakar. Using Ivory Coast grown cotton, it now produces yarns, thread and some cloth, consumed entirely in the Ivory Coast. The current capacity is 1,500 tons of raw cotton and 480 tons of other fibers per year. Current expansion is intended to bring the annual capacity for spinning to 3,000 tons of raw cotton.

Soap Factory. Blohorn at Abidjan. Capacity in 1938 was 1,000 tons annually. In 1953 the capacity was 6,000 tons for consumption in Africa. One small 1,500 ton oil mill served this factory before World War II. Now there is another soap factory and an oil mill industry for export as well as local use.

Saw Mills and Related Industry. In 1938, twenty saw mills were in operation producing from 14 to 22 million board feet of rough sawed lumber for both local use and export. In 1946 and later, production has been about the same. Both before and after the war the capacity of the mills was much greater, but other factors such as the scarcity of skilled labor and <sup>the</sup>atrocious transportation <sup>facilities</sup> prevented full use of raw materials and plants.

After 1946,

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After 1946, veneer and plywood plants began to be installed and they quickly absorbed the small supply of increasingly skilled labor developed by on-the-job experience and by the vocational schools. In contrast to the pre-war practice where only the muscles of men were used, native labor is now operating machines and using judgment in industry. The production of veneer and plywood now makes it possible to reduce the fantastic handling and shipping charges by improving bulk-value ratio. Current production: about 1,800 cubic meters, or tons, of veneer and about 2,400 cubic meters, or tons, of high value plywood annually, mostly for export.

The key to virtually all current economic development in Ivory Coast is the Vridi Canal, opened in August 1950. Ivory Coast, half again the size of Gold Coast, and with a great variety of natural resources and undefined riches, has over 300 miles of coastline. But the Ivory Coast had no harbors and no sheltered water accessible to the sea. The Vridi Canal now connects hundreds of square miles of lagoon with the sea and has made of Abidjan a deep water seaport. From 1946 to 1950, industrial and economic planning assumed that the canal would be opened. Since 1950, the economy of the territory has, of course, profited by the easier movement provided by this canal.

The industries set up since 1946 with access to the port of Abidjan include:

1. Acobodabou

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1. Acobodabou Oil Mill. Capacity: 4,000 tons of palm oil yearly; quality is being improved in order to increase the amounts entering international trade.

2. R.I.C.C. Paper Mill. Capacity: 6,000 tons of Kraft quality paper, for use in packaging bananas and other African products. Eventually it may export paper, a general world need.

3. Industrial Bakery. Capacity: 50,000 loaves of bread daily. It serves the region, and has reduced the cost of bread to the consumer.

4. Ivory Coast Brewery. Current Capacity: 30,000 h.l. (800,000 gals.) of beer; 20,000 tons of ice; and 60,000 h.l. (1,600,000 gals.) of soft drinks annually.

5. Van Leer Drum Plant. The opening of the Vridi Canal in 1950 permitted the docking of tankers and the use of bulk storage for gasoline and oil. This drum plant with a capacity of 1,200 drums daily provides drums largely for the distribution of petroleum products into the hinterland. In preparation, a "tank farm" was built on one bank of the canal before the canal was completed.

6. Ledent Cordage Plant. Capacity: 1,500 tons annually of string, cord, rope; using local sisal, and serving local and neighboring needs.

7. Pineapple Canneries (3). Capacity: 900,000 liters of juice, and 1,200,000 cans of slices annually for export. Progress and expansion will depend upon solving some current difficulties.

8. Cocoa Butter

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8. Cocoa Butter Factory (Sofabecao). Capacity: 2,000 tons annually, to be raised to 4,000, for export to Europe only. It uses culls and inferior grade cacao beans, but whose butter quality is sound. The factory serves a triple purpose by: (1) using unexportable beans; (2) providing a high value cash export; and (3) encouraging native growers not to mix or ship sub-grade beans.

It is anticipated that the products of the above industries and others like them, such as fruit preserving, will soon enter the world markets, as well as raise the local standard of living by increasing skilled employment and providing necessities made from local materials.

Similar, but less impressive, inventories could be made for Dahomey, French Sudan, Upper Volta and French Niger. As noted earlier, Dakar and Senegal, as the original and favored colony, already had some industrial development before the war. Her industrial economy has been greatly expanded since 1946 in line with the new policy. However, since Dakar is uneconomically remote from the sources of <sup>except peanuts</sup> most raw materials/and consumer centers of the Federation, <sup>from the main</sup> industrial development there does not clearly follow the pattern of the policy described by M. Bechard.

French Guinea is undergoing specialized industrial development which is greater than the general economic development of Ivory Coast. This is, however, due to the good fortune of having rich Bauxite and iron mines at the sea's edge and hydroelectric potentials close by.

The eighth

The eighth territory, Mauretania, is so hot, arid and devoid of vegetation that no way has yet been found to implement the policy of industrialization, even though considerable mineral deposits are already known.

For the purpose of encouraging further development and making sure that existing industrial projects will survive, the Grand Council of FWA, late in 1953, adopted tax relief measures for industry. Briefly, they are:

Extension of the "Five Year Plan" (1949) tax exemption on profits to certain industries installed before January 1, 1952. More liberal tax relief also is allowed on replacement tools, equipment and raw materials;

Reduction of the tax rates on private and corporate interests investing in FWA enterprises which directly affect the economy of the Federation, particularly those which have an industrial character;

Special provisions for industries which produce exportable products, designed to permit them to attain competitive prices early in their operations;

Considerable reduction of the export duties.

Something novel in the way of a formula of policy was adopted by the Grand Council: "... The total of export duties paid on processed articles shall not exceed the duties payable on the exportation of the raw materials of which they are composed."

The straight reduction of export duties with the application of the formula, resulted in a reduction of the export

taxes

taxes or duties on most raw and processed commodities by at least a third and the export taxes on many products have been eliminated completely.

An interesting feature of this complex tax measure is that it was developed in response to the economic needs of the territories themselves and was decided by vote of the elected representatives of the peoples and local interests concerned.



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#### A. AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY AND LAND USE

From the time the French first considered agriculture in West Africa 140 years ago, their general policy can quite simply be stated as planning "to improve the quality and expand the quantity in cooperation with the local population". The French came to realize through experience and costly mistakes that this policy could only be executed within two sharply defined limiting factors:

1. The rapid and often final degradation of most of the soil of West Africa under almost any known kind of cultivation.

2. The economic and political need to conserve so far as possible the ways of the traditional farming society.

These two factors are now the first considerations of agricultural and land policy in French West Africa.

In arriving at this stage of policy, the French were confronted by two basic conditions which effectively prevented the transplanting of European methods and practices to West Africa. These were:

1. The poverty of the soil and climate.
2. The lack of personal land ownership.

The two acted upon each other to upset many development plans of the Europeans.

It was first thought, and as long ago as 1817, that a little European "know-how" and encouragement of private ownership of land by Africans and a few European planters would quickly result in great and expanding productivity

with prosperity

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with prosperity for all. Except for extensive peanut crops, which have now exhausted the soil of Western Senegal, and the bananas of Guinea, the land did not produce anything like what was expected.

By the time of World War II, it was realized that the real problems were physical, due to the nature of the land, and were beyond the scope of existing knowledge. The problems were: the widespread laterization (degradation of land surface into low grade iron ore); the extremely thin top soil; the great rarity of humus; the lack of many essential minerals; the scarcity of water near fair soil and excessive water in other areas.

Extensive soil studies, or "inventories", were begun and research stations set up--some as early as 1922--but no great effective progress had been made when the war called a halt to expansion of these activities. Research and experiment in soils, products and methods were introduced on a massive scale shortly after the war with FIDES financing and management. The Compagnie Generale des Oleagineux Tropicaux (General Company of Tropical Oleaginous Plants); the Office de Recherche Scientifique Outre-Mer (Office of Overseas Scientific Research); the Institut de Recherche des Huiles et Oleagineux (Institute for Research in Oils and Oleaginous Plants); several local specialized organizations and a few private interests, established laboratories and research stations at significant places throughout the Federation. The total funds devoted to this type of work are the equivalent of millions of dollars.

In the meantime,

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In the meantime,

In the meantime, the first steps were taken toward what is commonly called "land reform". In this case it was a matter of determining ownership rather than re-apportioning large holdings.

As greater freedom of movement became possible following the period of "Pacification", tribes and families became free to work the land wherever they might choose, so long as no one else was working it or claimed it. Ownership was unknown and formerly land use had been determined by warfare. Failing records or anything else that might resolve the questions, physical presence on a piece of land became a common test for claim to ownership. The administration encouraged the local rural peoples to register officially title to the lands they used and thus was established the foundation of knowledge of ownership, or lack of it, on which the later land use improvements and controls were built.

There are some mild restrictions on the ownership of land by Europeans, which basically serve to protect the prior rights of Africans to lands. The result of this long-standing policy is that only in French Guinea do Europeans own the majority of any one kind of plantation. These are the specialized banana plantations established after the First World War. Other <sup>kinds of</sup> plantations in Guinea and elsewhere are largely African owned. In the Ivory Coast Europeans own only between 10 and 15 percent of the acreage devoted to the substantial production of coffee and cacao of that territory.

The large scale agricultural uses of land are the Government supported semi-mechanized peanut project of the CGOT

(General Company

(General Company of Tropical Oleaginous Plants) in Casamance, Senegal; the rice and cotton of the Office du Niger in Soudan; and the rice project of MAS (Mission d'Amenagement du Senegal) at Richard Toll in Senegal. They use lands which by their nature could not be worked by individual farmers. These projects, notably the "Office du Niger", include "colonization" schemes. Conceived in 1920 as a source of cotton for France, (2.5 million acres) planned in 1929 to provide for 4,000 square miles of rice and cotton tended by nearly a million people, it was placed in skeleton operation when the Sansanding Dam on the Niger River was completed in July 1947. The "colonization" pattern of the "Office du Niger" represents the most highly developed example of the implementation of the French policies and guiding principles on Agricultural development and land tenure.

The original reason for creating this great agricultural development project, and the justification for it in terms of what it has cost to the French taxpayer and what it can return to them, are both still subjects for serious debate. The cost of financing the project up to 1953 is officially stated to have been \$70 million of public funds, including \$4 million from the Marshall Plan. The total of funds actually used was some-  
for the project what greater,

It is said that an early reason/was the need to have an area of substantial bulk production in Africa, south of the Sahara, to justify the building of a Trans-Sahara railroad. This idea, of finding such production, was first propounded in 1873. By the early 1920's the idea became an economic necessity

necessity if the railroad was to receive any support from the taxpayers and voters. The Trans-Saharan railroad is becoming less and less likely of realization. The cost would indeed be of fantastic proportions, but the agricultural development project originally intended to justify it has become an entity of its own starting to feed and clothe Africans and to provide a prosperous farm life for some of them. What the scheme has already cost the taxpayers for land improvement has probably been forgotten. The fact is that it has taken nearly 4,000 square miles of good alluvial deposit, created in antiquity, but which, in known history, have had no water and consequently no settled inhabitants, and has made of it and the vicinity potential growing lands which may eventually require 800,000 people to farm and supply ancillary services. Thus far, 27,000 people have settled on these new lands and cultivate 95,000 acres. The total value of the crops, mostly rice, for<sup>the</sup>/1952-53 season was \$6,800,000.

It must be emphasized here that the engineering on this great development project does not provide a pattern for similar projects elsewhere in Africa. The secret of any success it may have is the fact that the lands being or to be irrigated are in a prehistoric or "dead" delta of the Niger River and now may be watered by gravity flow. The flood control provided by the dam improves agricultural prospects on some 2,600 additional square miles<sup>(1.6 million acres)</sup> of "live" delta which had suffered from the vagaries of the River. The total area of farm, living and support lands which could be affected by the project has been estimated. The Office du Niger, to be as much as 30,000 square miles (19 million acres)

The Office du Niger, having through research, engineering and building, corrected one of the many defects of the land in West Africa, has opened these lands to Africans from the poorer over-populated lands of the interior. Africans are encouraged to migrate to the better lands by arrangements similar to the old American "homestead" system, except that the settlers do not eventually own the land outright.

Elements of the Niger land tenure are used on the other agricultural development projects and reflect the over-all French policies in such matters. Following are excerpts from a statement by the Director General of the Office du Niger.\*

"The Office assigns newcomers of the same race together in order to conserve the traditional way of life--some races are matriarchal--(and thus cannot merge socially with patriarchal races).

"At the moment the applications exceed the number that can be accepted. --About 2,500 per year, which can certainly be increased in the future. ... The Public Authority having made the land productive at great expense, and having installed the complete necessary equipment; stores, work-shops, processing plants, cattle, transportation, selected seed, et cetera, et cetera... reserves to itself the control of these lands, and must make certain that the farmers to whom it is entrusted produce the desired quantities, and correctly use the resources put at their disposition. The soil thus remains the property of the State. ... represented by the Officer on Niger."

One or more parcels of improved land are put at the disposition of a Chief of an African family, called a "Colonist" or "settler", under contract.

The contract provides for a "period of adaptation of ten years. If at the end of this time the settler has

carried

\* Translated extracts from "Note sur la mise en valeur par la colonization Africaine des terres irriguees du Delta Central Nigerien", by P. Viguier, Ségou, August 25, 1949.



carried out his obligations and he is judged to be a good manager, he may be granted a "Lease of Permanent Establishment". This lease includes all the advantages of ownership including transmission by inheritance, but not the right to transfer it outside the family.

"It is to be noted that the situation of the settler ... in effect is the same as the traditional conception of the aborigines in matters of land tenure, according to which ownership of ground rests in a spiritual authority who is represented temporally by the 'Chief of the land' who in consideration of 'offerings' (to the spiritual authority) accords tenure of the ground to the people (or family) in his charge.

"For those who do not wish to commit themselves to permanent occupation of one place, one year contracts are available, renewable without limitation, and convertible to the other system if the farmer should change his mind.

"... The settlers must become members of the local 'Association Agricole Indigene' . . .

"... New settlers are transported to the land by the Office. Each receives the dwellings needed for the family; food allotments to last until the first harvest; livestock and tools; seed and fertilizer.

"... The villages average 300 in size . . . The dwellings are adaptations of the type generally used in the area, but it was not thought necessary to reproduce the confused tangle of huts and narrow lanes which characterize the Sudanese village . . . what the colonization villages lose in picturesqueness is made up in tidiness and salubrity. Each village has clean water wells, although the villagers sometimes find it easier to draw water from a nearby canal; a livestock yard, kept by salaried stockmen; a medical post visited daily by a nurse; . . . Shade and fruit trees; kitchen gardens.

"In brief, the framework in which the settlers live is not essentially different from their traditional environment; it can be said that it constitutes a happy compromise between the conceptions and tastes of the indigenes on the one hand, and on the other hand the desire of the tutor organism to improve their conditions of life."

The "Associations

The "Associations Agricoles Indigènes" participate in the various services and activities such as research, processing and marketing of crops, maintenance of irrigation installations; medical and veterinary aid; merchandizing consumer goods in the villages and many others. This participation is extended as training and experience becomes broader. In this sense the Office is conducting an on-the-job training program in agricultural economy.

For the rest, agriculture is in the hands of small individual or groups of community farmers. Most of it is subsistence farming on small temporary or migratory farms, and in West Africa must generally lie fallow longer than it is worked.

To work on the cash or export crops such as peanuts, coffee, and cacao, raised on larger or cooperative holdings, there is an extensive use of migratory farm labor. At present, these migrant workers usually have their own farm lands near their native villages to which they return after the working seasons for the cash crops. Two facts that have been increasingly recognized are that the home farms are still barely at the subsistence level and the lands to which the farmers migrate seasonally cannot support them permanently even on a subsistence basis. Policy now takes these facts into consideration where they exist to assure that farmers can earn some money over and above bare subsistence. The Administration improves, and sometimes even provides the transportation along the migratory routes; it takes steps to encourage enough of the traditional migrants

migrants needed for the crops, and when the required numbers have signed up it discourages from going those who would then not find work. The problem is usually the latter, for with increased interest in consumer goods the desire to earn extra money has increased.

In recent years new laws and regulations protect the migrant workers from exploitation and abuse, as well as assure that their agricultural labor, both on the home farm and in the seasonal fields will be of greater benefit to their homeland and themselves.

The foregoing are largely measures dictated by expediency and the mistakes of the past. The goal, ever in the minds of the policymakers is a settled, prosperous agricultural economy, with the maximum use of land without destroying it, the ogre which has all too frequently reared its head, shortly after some "improvement" had been introduced.

To this purpose much money and effort is devoted to research and scientific development over periods of years at experimental stations.

Plows and disc harrows have been used to "advance" the agricultural economy in Black Africa; and, except in such rare pockets as the Niger inland delta, a year or two later the thin top soil disappeared; trees and brush have been cleared to make room for the extension of agriculture, and a year or two later nothing would grow there, not even the original trees.

#### Provident Societies

### Provident Societies and Cooperatives

Today's Provident Societies and Cooperatives in FWA grew out of the initiative of Colonial officials in Senegal who in 1902 decided that each village should have a reserve granary.\*

A decree of June 29, 1910, established the legal basis for "Native Mutual Agricultural Provident, Aid and Loan Societies". One of the long series of decrees, laws and interpretations which have brought the system to its present highly developed state deserves mention. The decree of July 4, 1919 specified that only farmers and cattle raisers who were "French Subjects" should be members of the Society. The increasing numbers of Africans who had become "French Citizens" in Senegal were thus not eligible. This curious paradox was, however, resolved before 1946.

These societies, commonly called "Sociétés de Prévoyance" or SIP (Sociétés Indigènes de Prévoyance) operate substantially as the full name would indicate, and as they do in other countries. There is full participation by the membership, although the President of the Administrative Council in each Province is usually the "Commandant de Cercle", who thus, in effect, manages the Society. This point has received considerable attention in recent years and ways of opening the full management to the participants are being developed. Apart from this point, it is said\*\* that SIP "has given incontestable practical results . . . without upsetting the

traditional

\* Encycl. A.O.F., Vol. I, p. 321.  
 \*\* Idem, p. 324.

traditional structure of African society . . . has inspired the masses in enterprise and has developed profitable sentiments of cooperation and mutuality."

#### Mutual Agricultural Credit

"Le Credit Agricole Mutuel" was first established in 1926 and revised in 1931, for the purpose of maintaining and financing a network of banks required by the development of the Provident Societies, Cooperatives, Unions, insurance and re-insurance operations, whether African or European.

A Central Bank under the authorizing acts has been set up in the capital of each territory. The last one was opened in Mauretania in 1951. Provision was made for local banks or Mutual Agricultural Credit Societies to be set up anywhere under the Central Territorial Banks, but "the social evolution appears to be as yet insufficient to lead them (the local farmers) to take the initiative to form such organisms".\* Since the date of this statement (1949) it has become apparent that local banks were not needed and that the existing Provident societies, cooperatives, et cetera, could deal directly with the Central Banks.

The Banks are funded largely by the Government General of FWA although participation by the Societies and private capital is supposed to be to the extent possible.

The total operations of the various Agricultural Credit banks have rarely been more than the equivalent of a few tens of thousands of dollars. Their importance for the moment rests in the fact that they exist as instruments of policy.

#### B. MINING

\* Encycl. A.O.F., Vl. 1, p. 316.

## B. MINING

The policy toward the sub-soil resources is based primarily on current or projected research to learn what there is and how best to utilize it. The "Bureau Minier des Recherches de la France d'Outre Mer", according to its President\* "is charged with the duty of doing what the private mining industry has not done spontaneously, and is not to concern itself with existing private research or exploitation. ... but there is research that is too onerous, difficult or uncertain for private interests to risk . . . The Bureau has no monopoly, and although using public funds, it operates like a private enterprise and accepts and encourages the participation of private interests . . . particularly when the prospecting has been done and active mining becomes possible.

"The Bureau operates under the laws and rules of the Mine Service like anyone else . . ." It takes up a project "only at the request of the Territory" (or local interests). Emphasis is laid on "the economic support which such exploitation would give to the political and social evolution of the different territories. ... economic equilibrium."

The Bauxite mines of the Iles of Los and Boké and the iron mines near Conakry, all prospected and developed only after 1946, are prime examples of this policy. The future economic expansion of French Guinea pivots on the industrialization and incidental service being developed along with the mines. Substantial hydro-electric power is being installed

to process

\* Governor General Barthes, quoted variously in Bulletin d'Information of June 1, 1950 and Paris-Dakar of June 2, 1950.

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to process the Bauxite, but once installed it will serve many other purposes. The port of Conakry has been greatly expanded to handle the two or three million tons of iron ore each year, but will also serve other products. The seventy-five to 100 thousand tons of Bauxite shipped from the Islands to Canada each month are loaded directly on ships berthed at the Islands. Guinea, in particular, has several other mineral riches.

At the other end of the scale are diamond and gold workings which were already in private hands. These two, however, did not require the research and highly mechanized treatment needed to mine and transport Bauxite and iron ore. By necessity the diamond mines have been semi-mechanized, but for the placer gold of Siguiri, the laws of the land forbid both machinery and Europeans; extraction is limited to the placer process practiced by Africans. Approximately 100,000 ounces of gold are produced each year. The miners are some 15,000 professional gold miners of the Siguiri Province and about 100,000 "foreigners" who came from hundreds of miles around. Like the migrant farm laborers, they are seasonal; they come to Siguiri for a short time, pan the gold they think they need and return to their own lands when the time comes to plant, tend and harvest their own crops.

Half of the gold thus harvested is, according to French laws, sold to the Government at a fixed rate; the other half is sold on the open market by the Bank of France for the account of the producer. Whether all the gold produced in Siguiri finds its way into these official channels is questioned

in local

in local business circles. In any case the policy here is clearly in operation to assure that the local economy benefits and to preserve the prior rights of the local people to resources that they can manage without imported mechanical assistance.



## VI. SOCIAL POLICY

In a speech before the Grand Council of FWA, October 3, 1950, High Commissioner Bechard discussed the objectives of French policy in social matters:

"The Social Objectives may be defined quite simply as the liberation of man, the protection and betterment of his circumstances, and the raising of his standard of living.

"Protection of humanity against disease, misery and ignorance; raising of the standard of living by the development of technical instruction, by professional education, by the growth of capacity for work and production; these objectives which I define in broad strokes in a rather abstract manner are the only true, the only justifiable goals.

"I shall not dwell upon the admirable accomplishments of our Health Service, upon the eminent work of our native medical auxiliary, nor on our sanitary teams which have already succeeded in throttling the formerly murderous epidemics, such as small pox and yellow fever.

"I know that enormous work remains to be done during long years to come, in order to liberate the people from the manifold mortal dangers, of which the greatest continues to be malaria. But there again, the effort will be in vain if it is not coupled with the education of the public in sanitary matters.

"It is not enough to create, to install at great expense, dispensaries, hospitals, surgical operating theatres, if at the same time one does not set up the first line of defense against disease, such as sanitary education, starting in the schools; otherwise these installations will only be a costly mortgage which weighs more and more heavily on the development of the country.

"Likewise, it is through the schools, by education, by vocational training that we shall succeed in developing the productive capacity of our territories, whether it be in agriculture or in industry. ....

"Above all, we need engineers, foremen, workers specialized in the various techniques so necessary to our equipment and development.

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"and we must have a rational political education . . . to give them consciousness of their duties alongside of their rights . . .

" . . . . .

"The diversity, the incongruity of Africa, complicates the work of the educator who must adjust his deed to the different aspects of African society; modern or traditional élite;\* rural or urban proletarian masses. The rural population still live according to the traditional organization, but little by little individual consciousness is created and the old African society is changing profoundly.

"Those who abandon the tribal setting and flock to the cities are numerous. Gradually they form an urban proletariat which must be protected from itself according to the need. Alongside of these two masses, the rural tribal and the urban proletariat which, although economically quite different, are nevertheless very close to each other in mores, there appear on the scene, every day new élite who aspire to play larger and larger roles.

"The goal of our political action must be to form a coherent whole from these so-diverse elements, so as to allow the Africa of tomorrow to develop itself, to equip itself, that it may again take its place on a footing of equality with the so-called advanced countries. For the moment, however, this political action must be clothed in a distinctly educative character . . .

"Everyone of school age must be offered schooling, and we must, without cease or respite, open schools even in the most remote parts of our territories. Whatever some may think of it, instruction, while taking local realities into account, must be given in French, because West Africa is French in its culture; the French language is the cement of its political unity, and it is only through French that Africa can gain the full consciousness of herself."

#### A. EDUCATION

\* Mr. Bechard has used the term "élite" in its accepted West African sense. In this sense there is no real equivalent word in English. "Elite" may be defined as applying to those accepted Chiefs and others in traditional society who, through association with foreigners or educated Africans, have recognized the need for changes in cultural patterns and have acted on this need. In the "modern" and city society, the "élite" may be designated more specifically as those Africans who have acquired education and developed the ability to compete with Europeans in the (continued on following page)

\* (Footnote continued from p. 119)

African milieu. In other words, the elite are those who have risen above the primitive masses and have developed individual consciousness and the ability to think and act on a set of circumstances in an independent manner. The current step in this development is the consolidation of the individual consciousness of the "Elite" into collective consciousness.

## A. EDUCATION

In the last statement quoted from M. Bechard he may appear to have set, <sup>tab</sup> French language and culture above all others. What he unquestionably had in mind, and what his audience well knew was the hard fact that in French West Africa there are more than 100 principal languages and many times more dialects extant, none of which are written and none understood by a sufficient number of people to justify the attempt to reduce them to writing for the purpose of giving formal instruction in them. Generally, the vocabulary of the local language or dialect lacks the words and concepts required for almost any kind of education in the modern sense. To build up a working language to include them would, in effect, be to develop an almost new language which would then have to be taught in the schools and homes to the people. There is no true lingua franca in West Africa. Some languages have been so-called but, as practiced outside the primary tribal group, they have only a specialized vocabulary limited usually to trading terms. Arabic is the one exception, spoken by perhaps five percent of the population but written by only an infinitesimal few, could hardly be accepted by the French Government or public. Koranic schools have been the only indigenous schools which included reading and writing in any language other than French and these were mainly for the purpose of instruction in the Koran.

The objective of the education policy in FWA is to provide education for the entire population in quantity, and to provide

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provide quality of education equal to that of Metropolitan France.

The restrictions on the quantity possible to educate are threefold:

1. Financial limits as to what can be done for 2,000,000 children of school age in an area of low taxable income and property;
2. Difficulties in training or finding teachers who are competent and willing to teach in primitive regions;
3. The limited number of the population of school age who by aptitude or environmental preparation are now able to absorb more than the most rudimentary education--balanced against the scarcity of adequate teachers.

By 1952 finances and teachers provided for the teaching of approximately 200,000 students, and the number has increased steadily since then. As concerns quality, M. Camerlynck, Director General of Education in FWA in 1950 explained that the practice of policy in FWA was to reconcile two apparently contradictory precepts, both of which are accepted policy: assimilation to European standards; and adaptation to African conditions. He added that the "problem is infinitely complex".\*

Some points of assimilation are, he said, practical and justified, such as insisting upon the same qualifications of training and competence for full teachers and the higher ranks of educators, and strict alignment with Metropolitan France

\* Bulletin d'Information,  
May 25, 1950.

of diplomas,

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of diplomas, certificates of study and college entrance certificates.

Evidence of meeting these standards in the secondary and higher institutions in the larger centers is seen in the fact that White children of resident Europeans attend them and are reported to have no difficulties in pursuing higher education later in Europe. Native Africans in the same classes prepare for higher studies either in Dakar or in France, and the same standards of performance are demanded.

Schooling at a few spots had been offered to and accepted by young West Africans from about the time of the first contact of Europeans with Black Africa. Before the 19th Century, only the religious missionaries concerned themselves with education. It must be kept in mind that governments had not assumed the responsibilities of free education either in Europe or North America in this period. The efforts were often sound, but the results were more often ephemeral. Missionaries in the early days seldom stayed very long. Either they found living conditions difficult and went home, or they died.

Well before the American Revolutionary War, European languages came to be spoken by natives of West Africa. Missionaries unquestionably had their part in making these languages known. Since none of the local languages had a written version, the alternative to reducing hundreds of languages and dialects to writing was to teach the people a European language which could be written and already had a literature. Along with the missionary teachings of the early days

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(G)

early days, there was also a little teaching of the spoken European languages by the slave and ivory traders for business purposes.

It is recorded that when Father Alexis, a respected Friar, arrived at Rufisque, Senegal, in 1635, he complained that "the natives uttered vulgarities and swore violent oaths in French", This appears to have been the extent of expanded knowledge at that time.

Despite many valiant missionary efforts to introduce literacy nothing occurred which affects education in West Africa today until the French Government, in its new and growing feeling of being the Mother Country, sent a metropolitan schoolmaster to St. Louis in 1816 with the Schmaltz mission. This school master and his successors tried to use the principal local language, Wolof, as the medium of instruction. The positive policy of attempting to educate in local languages was officially given up in 1829, although a few isolated attempts have been made since then. The difficulties encountered by the pioneers in this field and confirmed by the later attempts were legion, complex and frustrating.

The over-all policy of Pacification, carried out in Mid-19th Century very definitely included popular education and through the medium of the French language. The ups and downs and contractions of popular education from 1829 onward are too numerous and complex to enumerate. Suffice it to say that somehow and somewhere, first in Senegal and later in the vast expanses of  
what is

what is now French West Africa, the basic policy of popular education was being modestly implemented and, more important, experience was being gained. The results are seen today in the high quality of French used by those few Africans who have several generations of formal education behind them. This in turn has created an atmosphere whereby the increasingly large numbers of Africans now being educated tend to use French of high quality.

The policy and pattern of education for the natives of French West Africa was first formalized in a decree of 1903. The Conference of Brazzaville (January 1944) and the Constitution of the Fourth Republic (1946) introduced many new features such as French citizenship, but the decree of 1903 set the pattern by which the education policy of today can be most easily visualized. Fifty years later there are not yet schools in every village; the cost in a thinly populated area half the size of the United States would be prohibitive. There are, nevertheless, about 1,400 village and other primary schools and a pyramid of higher schools through the university level now in existence. The total number of schools is increasing steadily.

The three basic types of primary schools provided for by the decree of 1903 are:

1. Village Schools. Villages, town districts, and "Agglomerations in the bush" were to have primary schools under native teachers, who would impart the rudiments of the French language, arithmetic and some notions of agriculture.

The village

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The village schools generally have only two or three classes, but there are approximately 750 of them.

2. Regional Schools. Intended for the more promising graduates of the village schools, the Regional schools usually have six classes and approach the standards of the Euro-American elementary schools. Because of the thinly spread nature of the population pattern, these schools can rarely be within walking distance of the homes. At the Regional schools, the parents of students are expected to provide their food and necessities; but at this point in the educational system, the administration steps in when necessary to provide food and care for the deserving or apt pupil.

3. Urban Schools. These are at the same educational level as the Regional, or Bush, schools, but with curricula adapted to the needs of large town or city dwellers.

The decree also provided that, as these schools produced increasing numbers of young people with elementary education, secondary schools of various types must be established for those who were able and willing to continue their education.

The policy and system of 1903 made it possible for graduates of certain secondary schools to enter higher institutions of learning in France and obtain the highest training and degrees, and some did. The fact that only very few West Africans did so early in the century had nothing to do with the policy, as there were no restrictions on scholastic advancement based on race or place of origin.

As time went on, and with the creation and development of vocational, normal and other secondary schools, it became  
advisable

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advisable to remove as far as possible the differences between the three types of elementary schools and to expand as many as possible into full six-year schools.

During this period, secondary, normal, vocational, agricultural pre-professional, pre-medical and special schools to train people for government and business clerkships were established in selected centers throughout the Federation. Some are designed to meet the needs peculiar to Black Africa; others to prepare the students according to European standards for higher education. One of the objectives of the system was to produce African teachers for expanding this system, and many of those who had been through these schools remained in Africa to teach. There are over 70 secondary schools of eight different types attended by some 8,000 students. Early experience soon demonstrated that in order to meet the special needs of Africa a departure had to be made from the European system as concerns the vocational and technical training. Three levels of achievement have been set up as follows:

- S.1 Elementary school (6 years) certificate plus 3 years of specialization. (Skilled laborers)
- S.2 Industrial training diploma, plus 2 years of specialization. (Highly qualified workmen who may become master craftsmen.)
- S.3 Baccalaureat (high school) diploma, plus 2 years of specialization. (May be appointed Assistant Engineers. The best may become full engineers by continuing at a Metropolitan university.)

In fields of training other than the pure vocational compromises have also been made with the conditions peculiar to Africa. These provide for supplying Africa with the much  
needed

needed volume of fundamental training as well as making possible that the more intellectually able and promising students can continue straight on through the highest education and training offered by the French Union.

The practical and financial problems connected with taking care of the rapidly increasing numbers of Africans who became eligible for higher education in France threatened to destroy the very thing it was supposed to foster: equal opportunity for all.

In the period only ten to twenty years ago, when only a handful of Africans could qualify for higher education, it was easy enough to grant scholarships to those whose families could not afford the travel, tuition and living costs. In the late 1940s the extra costs of sending them all to France took on promise of enormity. The number of scholarship Africans in France had reached 842\* by 1952, and many more were becoming eligible. (Nearly 200 other students were financed through personal or private funds.) Then, too, experience had shown that a certain proportion of those educated in France had no desire to return to Africa and be of benefit to their own country.

The Institute

\* Official French sources differ widely as to what this figure should be. Possibly none of them are complete because of the numbers of National, Federal, and territorial governments and specialized agencies that provide scholarships.

The Institute of Higher Studies of Dakar was created by a Decree of April 6, 1950 as the first step toward founding the University of Dakar. The desire for a University in FWA was a natural result of the need for higher education as the development at the lower levels showed results. The need was accentuated by the desire to educate as many as possible at a lower cost than that involved in sending them all to France.

Under the "benevolent guardianship" of the Universities of Paris and Bordeaux, what is now the University of Dakar opened in November 1950 with four schools: Law, Medicine and Pharmacy, Sciences, and Letters.\* The first year's courses were offered at that time and the succeeding courses were added each year so that shortly complete University courses will be available to all properly qualified residents of French West Africa.

#### Private Education

Missionary societies and any other organizations from Europe, and America, wishing to do so are permitted to operate schools in FWA.

There are about 240 of these privately financed schools. Their effectiveness and the total numbers of their students are uncertain because of the great variety of interests

\* The first year of the Law School and elements of Sciences and Letters were actually started a year earlier. involved

involved and the practical difficulties experienced by the Department of Education in inspecting and classifying them.

It has happened, for example, that a private society has reported a flourishing school to its home office. This school had not been accredited by the Department and, locally, was considered on the whole to have few facilities and a rather limited regular attendance. Some of the organizations have attempted to reduce a local language to writing and conduct education in that language. After years of effort they found that the only reading available to their students consisted of the textbooks, the dictionary and one or two classics the Society had translated into the written language it had produced. Since the language used in each instance was only one of a hundred or more, education by these organizations in the sense of broadening the intellectual horizons cannot be said to have been of any lasting value.

The school of any private society may, however, be accredited to the FWA school system if it meets the standards set by the government for curriculum and use of French, and if the teachers hold Metropolitan French teaching certificates.

A number of American missionary societies, as well as French and other nationalities, operate accredited schools, but here again the total enrollment is uncertain.

The official policy on privately fostered education appears to be that, within simple educational standards and political reliability, all are welcome to assist towards the objective of spreading basic education as widely as possible.

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## B. HEALTH AND SANITATION

The French Health Policy for FWA is--"To develop the races of Black Africa by improving their physical condition and increasing the number of individuals," according to General Peltier.\*

It is in the field of health for the entire African population, in the bush as well as in the urban and industrial centers, that the French have produced results that can only be called astounding.

During the period of Pacification late in the 19th Century, the military physicians with the troops, began to realize that France had acquired some of the most pestilential lands on earth. The very high morbidity and mortality rate prevailing was found to result from "spectacular and very murderous epidemic diseases which raged with singular intensity in the country".\*\*

The physicians found that it was hopeless to attempt to treat disease on an individual patient basis. They directed their attention to what they considered to be the most serious diseases and attacked them through research, hygiene and preventive and social medicine on a mass basis. Some of the lesser but no less deadly diseases were at first ignored for a lack of any known method of attack, or a lack of personnel and funds adequate to make any impression on the problems. These vicious and killing diseases kept the populations at

low figures

\* Encycl. A.O.F., Vol. I, p. 280.  
\*\* General Peltier. Encycl. A.O.F.,  
Vol. I, p. 279.



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low figures and in generally weak condition, and the majority of white men could expect to die or at least be crippled by disease in a relatively short time. The work was begun on an officially organized basis some 50 years ago (1904) and now the worst diseases are under control.

Yellow Fever has been eliminated (except for a stray case or two in some but not all recent years).

African Sleeping Sickness, one of the <sup>most</sup> devastating diseases has been reduced to manageable proportions.

Malaria has been virtually eliminated in some of the larger urban centers, and is under a measure of control in many vast rural areas.

Following the recent successes in the campaign against the foregoing three killer diseases, the energies of the research organizations are now being directed toward leprosy in the hope of finding some new cure or at least the best means of controlling this disease.

The record of accomplishment in the health field speaks for itself. The policy of attempting to eliminate the debilitating endemic diseases as a prerequisite for the economic and social development of the Federation is making substantial progress. The current situation is described as follows:\*

Malaria: The very sketchy nature of diagnosis and statistics for the entire population, and particularly statistics for previous decades, makes a precise evaluation of progress, or of implementation of the policy, very difficult indeed.

Medical

\* Based on official reports published in Bulletin d'Information, Oct. 5, 1950 and other sources.

Medical opinion, however, states that not so long ago all inhabitants of the FWA had one degree or another of Malaria. This included most of the White Europeans. Many Europeans showed no serious signs of the disease while they were in West Africa, but far too many of them became ill and often died when they returned to Europe--and stopped taking quinine.

Indications of progress are found in the fact that malaria is now almost non-existent in the great urban centers of FWA for which statistics are available. Few, if any, recent cases are known to have originated in the City of Dakar. Conakry, Bamako, Bobo-Dioulasso and many other centers now have very few cases.

Yellow Fever: Within the lifetime and experience of Europeans still living in West Africa, yellow fever epidemics have decimated European groups there. The last large epidemic was in 1927 when half the European population of Dakar was destroyed. No one knows the extent of loss among the African population in that epidemic. For the West Africans themselves, the disease was endemic and ~~for some reason less devastating than~~ ~~for Europeans.~~ ~~the disease was endemic and for some reason less devastating than for Europeans.~~ The campaign against this terrifying disease reached its climax when only five cases were reported in 1944--in an area half the size of the United States. Not one case was found in 1949 and in 1950. Two deaths occurred in Dahomey in 1951, which brought renewed efforts to make sure the disease was stamped out.

Small Pox: Formerly a terrible scourge in West Africa, it is now under control. In the past 10 years 35,000,000 vaccinations have been given. An official report states

"At present

"At present small pox hits only those who through negligence or opposition have escaped being vaccinated."

Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis: This is apparently a new problem. Whether it existed prior to 1937, which is likely, or what it was called by the natives, has not been determined with certainty. Since 1937, 15,000 to 25,000 cases occur seasonally from December to April each year. There appears to be some connection between this and the fact that the rainy season in most of FWA ends in November or December. There is no marked seasonal change of temperature in most of the area. No preventive has yet been developed, but mortality has been reduced from 60 percent in 1937 to about 20 percent by 1950. Outbreaks usually occur in remote rural areas, which makes it very difficult to apply any kind of treatment or observation until the disease has progressed rather far.

African Sleeping Sickness: This disease was "discovered" in FWA only in 1932, when the full magnitude of its devastation was seen. Successive attempts were made to study and combat it by the Pasteur Institute and other Government supported agencies. By 1939, trial and error, research and data had begun to show the way. A decree of January 30, 1939 and later decrees and legislation provided for a special service to combat this scourge. The work soon took two forms, both involving considerable investigation and research. One is the long range attack, the effort to clean the infected lands of the Tse-Tse fly breeding places. Considering the vast areas concerned, this will take much time and money. The short range

short range attack is the inoculation of the population in the Sleeping Sickness areas. The incidence of the disease in the infected areas has been reduced from between 50 and 70 per thousand of the population to less than two per thousand. As with the sands of the Sahara, when Africa was divided up, the French got most of the Sleeping Sickness lands, albeit unwittingly. The story of the attack on the disease is a story in itself and the statistics are staggering. It is hoped that Sleeping Sickness will soon go the way of Yellow Fever in French West Africa.

There follow extracts from the report of the Service General d'Hygiene Mobile et de Prophylaxie (S.G.H.M.P.) on activity during 1952:\*

"Sleeping sickness is not yet definitely conquered. It has, however, been greatly reduced by the methodical and thorough action of the Sleeping Sickness Service and its successor, the S.G.H.M.P.

"Upper Volta was formerly the most infested territory of FWA. Sleeping Sickness has now become a 'minor' endemic disease there.

"In French Niger Sleeping Sickness is now practically non-existent. Three of the four afflicted persons reported in 1952 were discovered by the border 'filter' posts on their way to Niger from the Gold Coast.

"In Dahomey the sickness is being reduced slowly but surely. A small pocket exists among the Berbas, a rather independent people near the Togo border, who manage to escape supervision. A combined Togo-Dahomey control operation has been set up.

"In Ivory Coast the situation is less favorable. In some areas the sickness is being reduced, but in others hostility and defiance of the people (against 'regimentation') result in serious failure to report for inoculation and treatment.

"Patience and persuasion are bearing fruit.

"The present

\* Cote d'Ivoire, Oct. 3, 1953.

"The present indices are revealing, and work is to be concentrated in the Cantons bordering on Liberia, hotbed of infestation."

Leprosy: An intense campaign against Leprosy was started in 1945. Of the 150,000 lepers known to exist at that time, more than half have been located and given some attention. The campaign is becoming effective with treatment and education of the ill to encourage them to accept observation and long treatment.

Tuberculosis: This is an urban disease in West Africa. Tuberculosis cases increased in expanding proportion as the cities grew in size from 1950 onward. Late in the 1940's the Health Service attacked the spreading of the disease with BCG. It has effected a decrease in incidence also through improved sanitation, health habits, et cetera. Tuberculosis now appears to be under considerable control in the cities of this area.

Cancer: Certain forms of cancer are peculiar to West Africa. The Pasteur Institute is studying these forms and the hospitals of Dakar are equipped with personnel and facilities to treat them.

Syphilis: Some 250,000 cases, or 15 per 1,000 of the population become known to the authorities each year, and it is recognized that many are never reported. A special Social Hygiene Service operates in each of the principal centers and there are mobile units which search out and treat the disease in the Bush villages and among the nomads.

These are

These are the most serious diseases. There are many others and many blood and intestinal and tissue parasites too numerous to mention. As a part of the new policy of 1946, the attempt to bestow on the African peoples all the benefits of French citizenship, the Government is continuing to develop and increase the various public health and medical services. It is expanding at least the basic research and experimentation into practical application for the care and treatment of the population. It is now moving into the prevention of other conditions caused by parasites as fast as the funds and the training of local personnel permit.

#### Facilities

Hospitals exist in all the larger population centers; and they are being steadily enlarged and increased in number. Dispensaries and first-aid stations are spread widely throughout the Federation and new ones are constantly being installed. Most of the facilities in the rural areas may look rather primitive to American eyes, but these facilities for health aid are now functioning where none existed only a few years ago.

Generally speaking, the hospitals for Africans in the larger urban centers are, in comparison with the rest of the environment, of ample proportions, well-equipped and well manned. They are superior to the facilities available to the European population in FWA. For example, Dakar has no real public maternity facilities for the 35,000 White population of the city, but does have a large well-equipped maternity hospital for the Africans.

There is now

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There is now in FWA virtually every type of medical establishment known in Europe and America and they are well, if thinly, distributed throughout the Federation. In addition, there are institutions designed for diseases and conditions peculiar to Africa. An inventory of them would require several pages. In brief, there are over 1,000 establishments in about 20 categories ranging from fully-equipped general hospitals (eight to 25, depending upon definition of "fully-equipped") to quarantine stations and medical posts in the charge of trained African midwives. There are more than 25,000 hospital beds for Africans. Approximately 4,000,000 cases of the eight most debilitating categories of disease and ailments are treated annually, and more than 30,000,000 medical consultations are given.

These facilities are manned by approximately 500 Europeans and 4,500 Africans with professional training.\* Two hundred and fifty or more of the Europeans are fully qualified M.D.'s, pharmacists, and dentists; the rest are trained nurses, sanitary engineers, laboratory technicians and similar specialists. Of the Africans, approximately 700 are "African doctors", pharmacists, nurses and midwives who have graduated from the "African School of Medicine and Pharmacy" at Dakar. The remainder are medical, pharmacy and laboratory assistants, nurses and sanitary technicians.

This is the government-founded and operated public medical and health system. In addition, there are a number of privately owned

\* Here again official figures vary according to source. These figures may be considered to be conservative minima. The actual totals may be 10 to 20 percent higher.

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owned clinics, private doctors, and dentists available to those Africans as well as Europeans who prefer and can afford private treatment. There are also a considerable number of clinics, dispensaries and other facilities, some with beds, maintained by missionary societies, and various industrial and development enterprises employing or supervising workers.

#### Research and Epidemic Control

The Pasteur Institute. Almost immediately after the foundation of the Institut Pasteur at Paris in 1888, scientists from the Institut began to go to many parts of the French Empire. In addition to rabies, they worked on the most demanding local situations such as anthrax and amebiasis in St. Louis, Senegal, in 1896; yellow fever in Dakar in 1930; and in Kindia in 1922 developed vaccines for infectious animal disease control.

Two scientific institutions, the Pasteur Institute of Dakar, and the Pasteur Institute of Kindia (French Guinea) were established in 1937. They are autonomous in French West Africa, but are branches of the Pasteur Institute of Paris. They carry on the work begun by Pasteur scientists in 1896 with a modest laboratory of African Bacteriology at St. Louis, Senegal. The laboratory was moved to Dakar in 1913 and expanded its fields of activity.

The two Pasteur Institutes now in FWA carry out the broad principles of French Policy in Black Africa by:

- (1) working toward the improvement of health of the native population;
- (2) developing techniques and competence among the natives



the natives for continued work with Pasteur methods; (3) carrying to completion within the African area so far as possible all work on African health problems.

The Pasteur Institute of Dakar engages in research in the fields of infections and parasitic diseases. It also assists in anthropological studies of the native population looking toward the improvement in living standards, by performing research on the vitamin and nutritional values of locally available foods.

The Pasteur Institute of Kindia was originally founded in 1922<sup>as a research station.</sup> Immediately after starting research on serums and vaccines, the program was expanded as follows: (1) preparing vaccines and serums for the use of the zootechnique services of the colonies in Black Africa; (2) research in the virulent and parasitic diseases of animals; (3) raising monkeys for experimental work. The site, 100 miles inland in French Guinea was chosen because of the dense chimpanzee and monkey population of the region and because practically all the diseases and human and animal parasites known in Black Africa were to be found in the vicinity. It soon became known as "Pastoria".

Pastoria became an international research center with the approval and support of the French Government in 1931, when living quarters were constructed there for the use of "foreign scientists and students wishing to take advantage, temporarily, of the scientific equipment and research material existing at Pastoria".\*

\* Statement to the writer in 1949 of Col. Dr. Lefrou, in charge of Pastoria.

When the

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When the center became an autonomous Institute in 1937 it began to expand its activities to include more and more activities of human interest. World War II caused the supplies of vaccines, et cetera, from Europe to be cut off. In 1942, Pastoria began making smallpox vaccine and supplied all of French Black Africa (FWA, FEA, and the Cameroons). Dr. Calmette, of BCG fame, had become interested in tuberculosis while at the Pasteur Institut in Paris. In 1914 he envisaged further research on tuberculosis in Africa where he could use chimpanzees for experiments. Here, at Kindia, he began the first research work which finally resulted in the development of B.C.G. vaccine for the control of tuberculosis which is now being used in many parts of the world. Pastoria continues to be one of the production centers for this vaccine.

Among the activities carried out at Pastoria are: production of rabies and snake venom serums; research in intestinal diseases and parasites; "typhose aviare"; sleeping sickness and cancer research.

#### Mobile Health Service

Service General d'Hygiene Mobile et de Prophylaxie de l'A.O.F. (SGHMP). This organization was originally founded in 1936 as the Sleeping Sickness Service. In 1946 by authority of the Minister of Overseas France, the name was changed to SGHMP and its terms of reference were expanded to include attention to malaria, leprosy and in general all the tropical endemic diseases.

A few statistics will suggest the form and effectiveness of this organization in carrying out the official policy of attempting

attempting to eliminate the worst diseases suffered by the native population. All figures are approximate.

Ninety mobile teams travel throughout the Federation seeking out and treating the more serious endemic diseases. They use more than 150 motor trucks; 60 European M.D.'s, pharmacists and medical assistants; and 1,400 African doctors, pharmacists and nurses. The teams visit each year about 6,000,000 people and give about 10,000,000 medical consultations. They also give more than 2,000,000 yellow fever vaccinations annually.

The SGMPH maintains its principal laboratories and hospitals at Bobo-Dioulasso, Upper Volta, the center of an area which has a large incidence of debilitating diseases, including especially sleeping sickness. A considerable number of branch research and treatment stations have in recent years been established at points of greatest medical interest. High Commissioner Becharard has said: "It would be fastidious to list them."

#### Animal Husbandry Service

The Service de l'Elevage, Animal Husbandry Service, was created in 1922, for the purpose, among other things, of conducting research on certain cattle diseases that were seriously interfering with development of the cattle industry in FWA. After 30 years of continuous activity, the Service claims to have the most serious epizootic diseases under control.

In 1926, the first antipestique formole vaccine was discovered. An adequate laboratory was built in Dakar in 1932, and the production of vaccines and serums was first established on a volume

on a volume basis. It now produces between 5 and 6 million doses of 11 types of vaccines and serums annually for use not only in the French territories, but also in several of the neighboring British and Portuguese colonies and in Liberia. In addition the Laboratory conducts research on diseases which are common to men and animals, as well as numerous other endemic diseases which are more or less localized. In this it coordinates its activity with the two Pasteur Institutes in FWA.

The Laboratory conducts training courses for African veterinarians and graduate refresher courses for practicing veterinarians. Mobile teams seek out the areas of endemic disease and treatment stations are maintained in the principal centers in the interior.

#### Training of Health Workers

Training of Africans in medical and sanitation work is conducted both in schools and in practical field work.

A school of Medicine was established in 1919 at Dakar for the purpose of giving Africans limited medical training and preparation for the more promising for full medical training in France. In 1944 it was expanded to include Pharmacy. This school, up to 1950, graduated men and women as "African doctors", pharmacists, nurses and midwives. The courses of training, four years for the "African doctors", and three years each for the others did not meet the European or American standards for such as the degree of Doctor of Medicine, et cetera, but were designed to produce a certain competence in the illnesses and situations the students were most likely to encounter later in Black Africa. During the period from 1919 to 1960 it was considered

considered to be more important to produce the maximum number of native medical personnel trained to deal with the most pressing problems, rather than to produce an infinitesimal number of fully trained M.D.'s, whose abilities would probably be largely wasted in the more primitive areas where the need for such native medical personnel was greater. The school graduated annually about 30 "African doctors", two pharmacists, and twenty-five midwives.

In 1950, the School of Medicine of the University of Dakar opened its first class leading to the French M.D. Degree. From the time of its opening, no more "African doctors" will be trained. There will soon be fully qualified and African-trained M.D.'s, whose degrees will permit them to practice in Africa, in France, or anywhere else in the French Union, or where French medical degrees are recognized.

The training standards for pharmacists and midwives also have been raised.

The <sup>M</sup>SNP, in addition to using some of the graduates of the Medical School at Dakar, trains in its own technical school at Bobo-Dioulasso additional Africans as medical technicians and other health personnel for its own specialized needs in its laboratories and in the field.

The faculties of both the old and new School of Medicine at Dakar, since 1910 have been and are still being drawn from the Faculties of Metropolitan French Universities. Nursing training for both males and females is provided by two or three year courses in government schools in most of the eight territories.

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## C. URBANIZATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Before World War II there was no overall official French Policy concerning the development or improvement of urban centers, communities or villages in West Africa. There were, however, accomplishments in this field, particularly in Senegal and the capital cities of the other territories. These were the results of initiative on the part of individual Governors and "Administrateurs" working with such funds, materials and local cooperation as they could muster. There are today towns and villages in French West Africa which are monuments to otherwise forgotten officials of 30 or more years ago.

There is little uniformity in what they did, other than that their town plans usually displayed the classic French pattern of straight streets, boulevards, diagonal avenues running into circles (rond points) and central park squares. Washington, D. C. is a prime example of this pattern.

The work in this field before World War II consisted largely of the laying out or re-aligning of cities and towns on orderly plans which could be expanded. Buildings were spaced and the plans generally were designed to prevent congestion; and sanitation consisted of street drainage systems, a considerable advance in itself. The Governors and "Administrateurs" drew more elaborate plans, but little else was done in the way of installing running water, underground sewage systems or electricity. There was no official policy and no budget to carry the work beyond what the individual

the individual official accomplished through his own inspiration. The "Colonial towns, without exception, grew at random."\*

The experience of the war years during which industry was, in effect, forced upon French Black Africa <sup>when</sup> it was recognized that industry should and would be expanded there, made it clear that people would be increasingly concentrated in centers. Added to this was recognition that the French influence of "pacification" which brought freedom of movement, education, vocational training, and the breaking down of many of the isolating features of traditional tribal life, would also bring an increasing taste for urban life where money could be earned and the amenities of a better life could be found. At the same time, advances in the field of medicine had removed the terrifying prospects of epidemics in thickly populated settlements.

The situation received its first official recognition in an "Ordonnance" of the French Republic of June 28, 1945, which laid down the principles for the approach to urbanization in the Overseas Territories. \*\* Subsequent decrees in 1945 and 1946 put these principles into action. One of them (Aug. 3, 1946) established the first list of towns and cities of the French Overseas Territories, <sup>†</sup> (except Indo-China) for which urbanization plans must be drawn up and carried out. Seventeen of the leading cities and towns of French West Africa were on this original list; more have been

\* Encycl. A. F., Vol. II, p. 273

\*\* Encycl. A. F., Vol. II, pp. 273 to 292; encyclopedie coloniale et Maritime, and the Nouveau A. F. Album de l'Asie Occidentale Francaise, May 1951.

† Including lands other than Overseas Territories.

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have been added to it since 1946.\*

An important feature of the current urbanization, community development and related policies is that there is no attempt or intention of moving people into urban areas or of imposing any type of European standard of dwelling or communal organization upon peoples who still adhere to the great varieties of traditional tribal life. The practical purpose of the policy appears to be to meet necessity in the sense that when economic forces, education and training, and when the new freedom of movement and freedom of selection of work, create, or promise to create concentrations of the native population at points away from their traditional homes, an urbanization plan is drawn up and set in motion.

In these first 17 cities selected for urbanization and community development, there were already considerable concentrations of people who had only recently given up the traditional life and were, at that time, exposing themselves to potential city slum life. The situation and the working out thereof, can best be described by recounting what is happening in Abidjan. This city, the capital of Ivory Coast, has undergone growth in size and importance beyond all calculations of 1945. Its economic expansion, taking place at the same time as the development of urbanization acted upon each other, has been of large proportions. All come have been drawn to Abidjan by the thousands, mostly from tribal life, to seek

\* They are: Cap Vert (the Federal District of Dakar with Rufisque and Thies); Senegal: St. Louis, Kolack; French Sudan: Bamako-Koulouba, Ségou; French Niger: Niamey; French Guinea: Conakry, Kindia, Kankan, Labe; Dahomey: Cotonou; Ivory Coast: Abidjan, Sassandra, Bouaké; Mali: Upper Volta: Bobo-Dioulasso; Dahomey: Cotonou.



to seek and find employment in construction and manufacturing, to set up small businesses, and not a few to engage in the newly acquired right of national politics.

From a modest lagoon fishing village in 1930 the African population of the city as the capital <sup>(effective 1934)</sup> of the colony had reached 27,000 in 1939. The post war revival and the bright promises for the economy of the city brought the African population to about 40,000 in 1950. By 1954 it had grown to more than 100,000.\*

This new group of city dwellers, being the largest recently detribalized group in French West Africa, and voluntarily so, is being studied by the Social Services, and new measures of social assistance are being tried out and developed. The people in the city at times have been found to be more amenable to guidance than people in their traditional environment.

Some situations, such as juvenile delinquency, certain moral and social behaviour problems, health and sanitation as well as general morale are vastly different in a community of 100,000 than they are in one of 20,000; and the reactions of West Africans to city life are in many respects different from those of Europeans and Americans.

This steady and heavy flow of people into a modern city has been much greater than private or public organizations could plan and provide for in housing, sanitation and public facilities.

Furthermore

\* Le Petit Afrique Oct. 1, 1953

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Furthermore, these people came from bush villages and tribal life of about the simplest level existing today on earth. Most of them were unfamiliar with such things as piped water, streets between groups of houses, or buildings with doors that open and shut. As they surged into Abidjan, they put up shelter where they saw fit and used any handy material. Their unfamiliarity with modern communal organization and facilities made it unlikely that the present situation could have been prevalent; for to attempt to do so would be to use restrictions and controls they would not understand and would, therefore, look upon as arbitrary violations of those liberties which had so carefully been spelled out to them. Besides, the labor of these people who so gladly swarmed to the city was needed.

The French policy may be stated as: In the interests of peace, prosperity and eventual progress, let nature take its course, do what you can, then solve the real problems when you find out what they are. This follows the general French policy of not imposing urbanization and other modern developments on people who are not ready to understand them.

As the picture has become clear, zoning has been extended or revised to meet the needs. In addition to streets, drainage and pure water supply, there are mathematically placed wash houses, toilets, etc. In certain zones construction must be of permanent materials. "Tradition 1" dwelling construction of mud and straw, where permitted, must conform, however, to certain improved techniques and designs.

Provision

Provision is made for properly spaced sports fields, schools, dispensaries, social centers, markets and religious structures.

The Social Services, both public and private, work with the people to train them in organized communal living, and in the use of sanitary facilities, electricity and the other equipment and facilities of modern urban life.

The experience in Dakar was on a larger scale, but not so spectacular. As early as 1936, Derwent Whittlesey said,\* "Dakar is the only city in the European (or Occidental) sense, in the whole of West Africa. No other center shows the clear-out areal differentiation of functions that characterize the <sup>and its dependencies</sup> urbs occidentales." The population of the city/was then about

15,000 25,000 including 6,500 Europeans. By 1950 there were about 300,000 Africans in the Federal capital, most of whom were living in rather haphazard and summary quarters but on a fairly regular civic pattern. Coming from all parts of Senegal, most parts of the Federation, and quite a few from British Gambia and Nigeria, the new city dwellers assembled in small groups within neighborhoods by race or tribal affiliation rather than by class or function. In this they retained elements of the family concept of the tribe. The neighborhoods tend to be functional in that fishermen live together, office clerks often live in groups and stevedores keep by themselves. This tendency retains

\* Geographical Review, The American Geographic Society of New York, Vol. 31, Nov. 4, 1941.

the racial or tribal features in that only certain few tribes will be fishermen, and the leading office workers are found to be largely from certain tribes in southern Dahomey, and so forth. The true Évolués and those Africans who have attained professional or business standing live anywhere in the city that their tastes dictates and their economic means permit. The residential districts in the city are thus differentiated by class but not by race, for prominent Africans are living in the "exclusive" districts of expensive, elaborately kept homes, while at the same time White Europeans of modest incomes are frequently found living in the same districts as Africans of the clerical and artisan classes.

As the post war growth of the city began in earnest there was fair order in the sense that streets, water and sanitation had been laid out as the population increased. Then, too the original inhabitants of the Cap Vert peninsula on which Dakar stands were industrious organized fishermen and the people who swelled the city had generally been filtered through the villages in Senegal where the basic essentials of urban living had been introduced many years earlier. Although the Medina, as the poorer section Dakar is called, was far from model or even salubrious, it nevertheless showed a measure of success for the feeble but basic attempt at

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introducing organized urban living in Senegal some 50 years and more ago.

When the plans called for by the decrees of 1946 and implemented by later budgets to redesign the entire Medina were ready in 1951, the work could be started without any great social or economic disturbance. As the city grew apace after 1946, the knowledge that the plans were being developed, made it possible in the meantime to reserve space for, and in some cases to build, the main road arteries, sports fields, and other features.

In the other cities of the Federation, the material and moral aspects of urbanization are being carried out on city plans using elements of the Abidjan and Dakar experience, and at times something of Paris.

Niamey, capital of French Niger, went to another extreme. In preparation for the swarms of people expected to give up tribal "bush" life for urban life, the city in the late 40's was laid out with streets, zoning, public facilities, etc., on so extensive a scale that internal transportation became a problem. For example, hardly anyone lives or works within easy walking distance of the Post Office and Bank. The purpose, of course, was to prevent congestion and the evils arising out of congestion, and to furnish the framework for healthful, peaceful urban life. It can be said, however, that there is plenty of empty space between zoned sections of Niamey for people to carry on with their old bush village dances and palavers.

Community

### Community Development in the Villages.

The French Policy of urbanization for the mass of the population, those who still live in "bush" villages, takes as a major premise the traditional character of the West African village. It is considered that this character is inexorable, for the foreseeable future at least.

The "bush" village itself is usually a homogenous grouping within a single tribe. This grouping is considered by the natives as a family and is so recognized by the French authorities.\* The social organization of the majority of the West African "bush" villages cannot be thought of in the terms accepted in Europe or America, nor even in the terms attributed to the Arabian, Saharan, or Asiatic Nomad village or family groupings which usually contain division of labor levels and castes. Their economy also follows a different pattern. There is no individual land ownership; and tangible/<sup>personal</sup> property scarcely exists in the "bush" village.

The status and location of a village depend directly on man's relation to nature in a marginal land. Long centuries ago the people who had lived there must have learned that the lands of West Africa generally cannot sustain a population on a continuous basis. A short period of cultivation must be followed by a long fallow period. Frequently a village has occupied a series of locations repeatedly in a fixed cycle. Those settlers who have not believed this have turned the land into a sterile desert in a little as four or five years of continuous cultivation. Therefore, the guiding

\* See D.H. A. #71, Oct. 12, 1950

the guiding principle for determination of policy on community development except for industrial or trading centers was that:

The fields are itinerant, the villages move to follow them.

Except in the recently industrialized centers, this fact of nature precludes many features of urbanization or village improvement, particularly those which involve permanent installations. After a number of attempts to set up "permanent" improvements in "bush" villages, it is now being recognized that to do so may condemn the villagers to eventual starvation or the village itself to complete abandonment. On the other hand, "Pacification" and the startling improvements in health and sanitation have permitted the population to increase to the point where free movement of villages to follow the fields has become more and more difficult. The Administration and private interests now encourage the creation of "principal villages", which are stationary, and assist in setting up temporary "farm camps" for use during the soil or crop working periods. The location of the farm camps are changed in accordance with scientific crop and land rotation procedures.

The system of "principal villages" and "farm camps" is not applied everywhere in the eight territories of French West Africa, or on the same formula. In an area half the size of the United States, or eight times the size of France, this would manifestly be illogical. The determination of how and where to apply this system is in the hands of the various but cooperating research and experimental organizations mentioned earlier. Unlike the United States and France, much of the lands of West Africa must, nevertheless, be treated with great caution<sup>even</sup> by these methods, for, according to many agronomists they are virtually all sub-marginal in one way or another.

#### D. DETRIBALIZATION

The French have made no direct attempt to detribalize the Africans in the sense of deliberately breaking up their tribal organizations, discrediting or removing tribal chiefs, or of forcibly transplanting whole groups of peoples. On the contrary, traditional chieftains are protected and encouraged to retain their spiritual and moral leadership. Following the death or abdication of a chieftain, the French administration has, however, at times appointed a new chieftain. It can be said that as an interim system this is an improvement over the former procedure by which a man often became a chieftain by force or by fetish, and this method will serve until such time as a more democratic system can be developed. In any case the appointed chieftain is frequently said to be the one whom the people had chosen by the "palaver" system, and his appointment in such cases is official confirmation of what is already a fact in the minds of the people concerned.\*

Detribalization is, however, being accomplished by a slow, evolutionary rather than revolutionary process. Practically every point of policy discussed in this paper has its effect on this process. It must be borne in mind that there are hundreds of tribes and that at the time of the French "Pacification" there were, according to M. Delafosse, one hundred and twenty-six principal but unwritten languages in daily use. By tradition the races and many of the tribes were continually

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\* See Chapter III, page 54.



at war. The basic psychological means for detribalization which was adopted early by the French and is continued with increasing intensity to this day is the use of French as the sole language of scholastic instruction and official communication.

After early experimental attempts,\* no official effort was made to reduce any of the hundreds of local languages and dialects to writing or to use them as media of instruction. It was found that the primitive quality of the languages and their background culture made it impossible to reduce them to writing for modern use. A common language was seen to be a necessity for purposes of administration, communication and commerce.

The widespread use of French has been very effective in reducing and at times destroying some of the undesirable features of the old tribal systems. Measures exist to ensure that outside the family or tribal environment French must be used. For example, Black soldiers receive mild punishment for using any tongue other than French, even among themselves, while on duty. This reduces the chances of misunderstanding among soldiers of different tribes and languages. It also reduces the opportunity in the army, <sup>the</sup> government services and in the schools for discord among cliques formed on original tribal lines, for generally the African languages follow strict tribal lines and amount to secret languages as far as members of other tribes are concerned.

In the "bush" or tribal country French has become the lingua franca where none existed before. Lacking a common

\* See Chapter VI, Education, Page 121.

language, the relations between neighboring tribes were formerly conducted by force. Rather than discuss a problem, or negotiate a barter through some stray interpreter, who in any case was seldom to be trusted, the tribe believing itself strong enough simply raided its neighbor to settle the matter or take what it wanted.

This system applied also to the desire for meat to eat on the part of the people in the coastal areas South and East of the Cape Verd peninsula where cattle would not thrive. Instead of negotiating with some distant inland tribe having cattle, they simply went out and caught a member of a near-by tribe to provide a feast. There was no spiritual (i.e., conversational) rapport with the man from the other tribe, therefore it was much the same as taking a bullock from them, if they had only had one.

The educational system furthers the psychological detribalization. The schools having only the first two to four grades are generally at the tribal level in that they are located in the tribal villages. Following that, the students who care to continue, being grounded in the use of French, attend schools in central towns with fixed tribal and racial student bodies. From here on progress through the higher schools is a process of the survival of the fittest on an individual basis, although the Government encourages representation in the higher schools from the various races and tribes as widely as circumstances permit.

In the same manner, African employees of Government and business are frequently moved about within the Federation on the basis of ability and skills, often with the ulterior motive

of de-emphasizing tribal and racial importance. Freedom of movement of individuals throughout the Federation is also a part of this policy.

The most recent and possibly the most far-reaching policy affecting tribal and racial consciousness is the carrying out of the provisions of the Constitution of the Fourth Republic (October 1946) which conferred citizenship in the French Union upon all natives of French West Africa. School teachers and administrators assiduously dwell upon the rights and duties of this status which they believe will gradually replace at least the undesirable features of tribal consciousness, by offering higher concepts to take their place.

The results of the policy and techniques of detribalization are beginning to be seen in the proceedings of such organizations as the National Youth Council of the French Union which last met in Yaoundé, Cameroons in October, 1953. Delegations from youth movements in France, Gabon, Chad, Oubangui, French Guinea, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, and French Niger attended.

Accounts of the meeting were widely reported in African newspapers and at subsequent local meetings of the member organizations. What was said by these youths, and how, is revealing as concerns the relations between the White Europeans from both Africa and France, and the Black African Frenchmen, some of whom had only recently been drawn away from the traditional tribal life. Significant was the freedom of expression and the realism in discussing basic social problems without making racial issues out of them. The concept of the French Union in

its entirety as opposed to tribalism and with its possible extension, the concept of small national groups or areas built on the tribal system, was clearly shown in the discussions on citizenship, education, economic opportunities, feminine advancement, and detrimental influences from Europe. It was quite clear that these young people understood and accepted the idea that a strong French Union was possible, and that each individual had his part in continuing that Union.

Numerous conferences of this sort have been held by similar organizations in the French Union in recent years. They bear out and develop the basic French policy of participation in government by the natives, even to the extent of open discussion of their problems by clubs and organizations.

At Yaoundé the African host member in his welcoming speech\* gave his opinion that "the two principal enemies of youth were alcohol which destroys the body and bad movies which corrupt the soul." He said the French of the Metropole responsible for the invasion of the overseas territories by these enemies should think this over.

One of the main topics of the conference was "feminine advancement." A speaker said, "One cannot speak of valid advancement of the man if woman stays behind.... The African women, being neither goddesses nor slaves should play the roles of both brake and motor in the evolution of their countries.... So that the man will not be frustrated if his liberty is limited by that of his companion, he has everything to gain from a wife who is

\* "La Cote d'Ivoire," November 6, 1958.

worthy of him. All this, of course, excludes polygamy which is unworthy of the woman, as it is of the man."

Other topics discussed at the conference were: "Citizenship in the French Union and the prospects it opens up for opportunities." One "overseas" delegate, after pointing out that absolute independence of nations is from now on an out of date notion, expressed the hope that "France herself would think more and better about the French Union before contracting marriage in other unions." This approach is a far cry from the yearning for nationalism believed to exist in most so-called independent areas. It is nevertheless a form of "self-determination" in that a representative of a so-called dependent territory attempts to tell the Mother country to keep her territories and perfect the Union.

Then after discussing the advantages of wider horizons for the people of the territories, the role of Metropolitan Frenchmen in the French Union was discussed. One delegate said that the early days of European colonization were an era of private financing; that beginning in 1946 a new economic phase of public investment has been in effect.

"In the social scheme of things the development of brotherhood must continue and be emphasized. ... It is no less essential to maintain a certain cadence so as to avoid anarchy...the sound advancement of workers assumes that they already possess the necessary social disciplines.... Africa must learn to honor manual labor and know that a qualified specialist is more useful than an office clerk."

The speaker asked for patience: "It is impossible to do

everything immediately. You cannot in a few years fashion skilled workers out of ingredients pulled directly out of their 'tribus natales'. It is increasingly urgent to put the proletariat on their guard against foreign propaganda which makes promises which sound so easy and clear, but whose examples of precedent to which it can honestly refer are far from the principles officially claimed."

-1597A-

## LABOR POLICY

In times past labor and slavery in West Africa were virtually synonymous. Labor/<sup>thus</sup>was an economic commodity. There was no voluntary labor for wages; work was exacted rather than enticed.

Families and tribes generally performed their own subsistence work, but they were always glad to have a few captives from some other tribe to do the heavy work. Certain tribes in particular made a specialty of having captives work for them, while a cert in few tribes had become traditional slave tribes over a period of generations.

The concept of obtaining personal services in exchange for offers of money or goods did not exist. While slavery was in the process of being abolished early in the nineteenth century, the efforts of the French and other European nations in Africa to obtain labor in return for pay did not produce results. A man might be persuaded to work for a certain object, or the money to buy something he had in mind, but when he had earned it he stopped working. Few skills were then developed in individuals and a trained labor supply did not come into being.

In order to provide any kind of economic or social facilities for the common benefit, the French and other European powers resorted to "compulsory" labor. This took a variety of forms such as: payment to a Chief for so many man-days of work; levy upon the Chief in lieu of taxes; or straight conscription. Various measures were then taken between <sup>world</sup> wars to humanize the system. In 1930 the French decided by law that compulsory labor could only be

used on

French Togoland, 35; and Madagascar, 34.

The development of Labor Policy and Unions among workers in French Black Africa on a non-racial basis from 1946 to 1954, and particularly after 1952, may be called the period of experiment and beginning experience. Few conclusions can be drawn now other than that the full pattern for the protection and advancement of both labor and management has been created by law and regulation.

As the machinery begins to function and is accepted over greater areas of the Federations, more stable relationships will undoubtedly ensue.



used on works of public interest. The lists of activities officially recognized as "works of public interest" became very long; they included plantations and the like, notably in the Ivory Coast, which contributed to the economy of the country. Laws and regulations were introduced to establish standards of wages, care and treatment for the compulsory laborers. Labor was still a commodity for it could be acquired at will, could be moved about and when not required further could be dismissed to the "bush" and thus lost; a fresh supply could always be found.

Labor acquired a social character when a decree of the French Parliament of April 11, 1946 abolished forced labor in all its forms. The Preamble of the Constitution of October 1946 confirmed the principle contained in this decree and went somewhat further, in these words:

"Everyone shall have the duty to work and the right to obtain employment. No one may suffer in his work or his employment because of his origin, his opinions or his beliefs.

"Everyone may defend his rights and interests by trade-union action and may join the union of his choice."

The immediate effect of these two acts was a mild form of pandemonium in many places. Great numbers of workers on government development projects, roads, school buildings, etc., who had no abiding interest in work, quite naturally went home, and they could not be replaced. By 1948 many of the great social and economic

\* Translation from French Embassy Information Service, New York

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economic developments had bogged down for a lack of labor. Even more important, the far flung dirt-road system on which so much else depended could not be maintained. Offers of increased wages and benefits had little effect in drawing the labor supply out of the bush again.

The situation was not improved by the many labor union organizers who either came from France or sprang up locally, to offer the union membership promised by the Constitution. Unions appeared and disappeared, merged and reorganized at a rapid rate. The Government and private employers could not always be sure that the union officials with whom they negotiated would have the same union, or the union would have them a few months later.

As the scarcity of voluntary labor continued, a new point of policy forced itself into the thinking of the French and African leaders. Much more rapidly than had been anticipated a small scale industrial revolution took place. In order to save the plans for economic and social development, and to halt deterioration of the economic structure of the Federations, both the Administration and private interests in Africa concurrently turned to machinery as a substitute for the manual labor they were not able to employ in quantity.

At this time the Marshall Plan appeared on the scene like manna from Heaven, with offers of American machinery. Soon after, the factories of France began to produce equipment. Millions and millions of dollars worth of machinery was brought in and put on work that had never utilized machinery before in areas where maintenance facilities and trained operators did not exist.

A few white

A few white European operators and maintenance men were also imported, but the great hope of the planners was to train Africans for these purposes.

Training on the job was not always successful, but at the expense of misused and damaged machinery the training of Africans in the use of modern mechanical aids was nevertheless accelerated. The existence of mechanical equipment and the increased knowledge, largely by trial and error, of what it could and could not do in Africa expanded the demand for men with technical skills and thus raised substantially the top level of opportunities open to skilled labor.

As Africans increasingly saw the personal advantages of having mechanical skills as opposed to performing manual labor to supply their needs, the demands by them for technical and vocational training also grew; proficiency in these fields became more popular. Whether the planners of 1946 foresaw this reaction cannot be said, nor can it be said how lasting it will be, or what the end results will be. In any case, the policy mentioned in a previous chapter of introducing and increasing skills of laborers had received considerable impetus through this combination of circumstances and reactions.

The basic situation created by the decree of April 11, and the constitution of 1946, and accentuated by the succeeding events, led to a series of laws, administrative interpretations and considerable debate which culminated in the "Code du Travail..." Labor Code of France Overseas and Associated Territories, passed by the French National Assembly on December 15, 1948. Before

this and

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this and under the inspiration of the resolutions of the Conference of Brazzaville (1944) an Inspectorate General of Labor of the Overseas Territories had been created in 1946, coincident with the abolition of Compulsory Labor. The first duties of the Inspectorate were to formulate labor regulations and see that they were obeyed; advise employers and employees; and to mediate in their individual and collective differences\*.

Each territory was given an Inspectorate of Labor and local Regional Inspectorates of Labor. The start had been made; both Labor and Management then had access to disinterested official agencies to assist them in settling their problems; and more important, Labor in West Africa had someone to tell its troubles to like all other free men.

For the first four years of its existence the Agency, or "Inspectorate" reported it had found amicable solutions for 92 percent of the individual cases and for 87 of the collective cases submitted to it.

A decree of October 17, 1949, expanded Labor policy by creating a Federal Employment Office which was intended eventually to have offices in each of the Territories. Its basic purpose was to obtain the optimum use of man power with emphasis on seeing that specialized or skilled workers obtained the best employment and conditions for which they could qualify.

These are

\* Pierre Pelisson, Inspector General of Labor for F.T.A.  
Encyl. G.O.F., Vol. I, p. 302

These and other Government, Management and Labor Organizations were developing and expanding while the idea for an over-all, all-inclusive Labor Code was taking shape. During this period a number of Conventions, notably in 1946, and amended from time to time, fixed the general and minimum conditions of employment for the protection of both Labor and Employers. These Conventions were developed and agreed to by delegations from both sides and were enforced by the Inspectorates of Labor.

The Overseas Labor Code of December 15, 1952, "With its 241 Articles, is a codification of regulations already in effect, extended and completed on the basis of the French Labor Code.\* It rejected regulations and practices that were at variance with the principles stated in the Constitution of 1946. It added a great many features contained in the European French Labor Code, and which had not previously been applied in Africa. It includes all the features to be expected, such as : the 40-hour week; maximum number of hours of continuous work; weekly rest; paid vacations; hiring and firing procedures; limits on types of contracts; non-discrimination on basis of place of origin, sex, age and status; and special provisions governing the employment of women and children in line with International labor conventions.

"It legalizes the existence of Unions and defines their obligations and rights.\*\*

"There are now about 620 local labor unions in French Africa south of the Sahara . . . " distributed as follows: French West Africa, 340; French Equatorial Africa, 74; Cameroons, 138;

French

\*\* African Affairs #10, May 1954 French Embassy  
 \*\* Information Service, New York.  
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French Policy in West Africa  
and Its Implementation

NOTES ON TERMS USED

No general agreement yet exists on the meaning of many of the terms used in discussing or describing Africa's people and problems. There is not even a list of such terms as meet general agreement. A word or name in common use in one territory sometimes must be avoided in another for fear of giving offense. There is, for example, pride in mixed blood in some places and shame of it in others.

In this paper the questionable words and terms are used in their straightest possible sense. A few French terms are used when the original meaning might be lost in translation or when there is no exact English equivalent.

The French, means European Frenchmen of the white races. It sometimes includes people of Negro descent who are French officials, business or professional men.

The Whites, generally means Europeans, Americans and others of the white races. However, many of the Maures in Mauretania and French Sudan are just as white as South Europeans. This term is little used in French Africa at present, as it no longer fits any legal or social category; it applies only to the color of the skin which itself is now virtually without meaning.

The Europeans: This term is preferred in French West Africa to French and White for general use. In French laws and literature concerning Africa, it includes: Persons of the white races born in Africa, except Maures; Europeans in  
the generally

the generally accepted sense, Americans, Australians and others of the European developed new world and their citizens of Negro descent. Thus a mulatto or pure Negro from Martinique or the United States who finds himself in West Africa on business, or as an official, is a "European" legally and statistically.

The thousands of Lebanese and Syrian merchants in West Africa are not considered to be "Europeans"; they are "others" or "likened to Europeans".

The Africans: An increasingly important term indicating the natural inhabitants of West Africa. For legal purposes it includes Maures and Tou<sup>A</sup>regs, who may actually be white.

The Blacks: For want of a better term this is commonly used to mean the people of dark skin and kinky hair who are native to Africa south of the Sahara. The actual color varies widely, and some authorities assert that certain groups are not Negroes at all. "One can be Black without being Negro; and one can be Negro without being truly Black."\*

The Maures, Tou<sup>A</sup>regs, Berbers, et cetera: No common term has been found for these peoples of the white race who inhabit Africa south of the Sahara. Nineteenth Century and earlier writers called them all "Arabs" which is misleading and incorrect.

The Natives: This term has acquired connotations in English which have confused its meaning. It will be used here as the equivalent of the French "Indigène" in small letters or as an adjective to denote people who are descended from the inhabitants of the area before the advent of the Europeans.

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\* J. Richard-Molard, lecture at  
Dakar, May 5, 1949

Eurafricans: Persons of mixed White and Black ancestry born in Africa. Logically this term might apply to all persons of such ancestry. In common use, however, it is applied to the offspring of White Europeans and Black Africans in legal or informal union in the region south of the Sahara in Africa. Curiously, people having Negro blood in their veins, but born and raised on some other continent are usually considered by Black Africans to be Europeans.

Metis: A French term commonly and without opprobrium applied to Eurafricans.

Colored: A general term little used in French Black Africa, but understood there and throughout most of Black Africa to mean persons of mixed Black African and White European ancestry. This definition is important in any discussion of Africa south of the Sahara. Europeans and Americans frequently refer to any person of partial or complete Negro ancestry as colored. Africans of whatever hue, think of colored persons as having some black ancestry, but with an obvious admixture of White European or perhaps some Asiatic light shade of color.

"Evolue": This is a fairly loose term applied to Black Africans who, through education, association, and assimilation, have become detribalized and have replaced their tribal culture with a measure of European culture and living standards. These are the people who are equipped to engage in European type of employment, business or professional activities, either in France or in French Black Africa.

For some



For some reason, the Maures and Touaregs do not generally "evolve" or change their culture pattern.

"Elite": This also is a loose term. It applies in general to the "Evolues", but has an additional meaning to include tribal leaders who, while not necessarily Europeanized by education or in living customs, nevertheless are leaders in the social and economic development of their people.

Territory: The countries, eight of which make up the Federation of French West Africa, and four, the Federation of French Equatorial Africa. In area some of them are more than twice the size of France; some are twice the size of Texas; and the smallest is approximately the size of Pennsylvania. In most respects the relations of a Territory to France resemble those of Alaska and Hawaii to the United States except that the citizens resident in the French Territory in Africa may vote in the French National elections.

Cercle: The basic administrative unit within a Territory. Frequently called "district" in English. The connotation of "District" is too loose to be descriptive. Since the average size of a Cercle is 18,000 square miles, many authorities prefer "Province" as the English equivalent.

Commandant de Cercle: The District or Provincial Commissioner responsible for the administration of the Cercle. He may be alone in his Cercle, or in the more populous areas he may have a staff of Public Works, Agriculture, Health and other specialized officials, like the Governor of the Territory.

Administrateur: The Commandants de Cercle and many other non-technical officials are drawn from the corps of professional trained men

trained men products of the École Nationale de la France d'Outremer (National School of Overseas France) in France. These men all hold as a personal rank one or another grade of Administrateur such as: -General; -en Chef; Adjoint; which correspond roughly to rank in the Army. Promotion, also, roughly follows the Army pattern. As in the Diplomatic Services, all positions below High Commissioner and Governor corresponding in rank to Ambassadors and Ministers are normally held by career Administrateurs. Most of the Governors are, in practice, drawn from the career corps.

Very few statistics concerning French West and Equatorial Africa can be taken as accurate. In this vast and diversified area it has not yet been possible to compile complete statistics on most subjects and figures are frequently arrived at in varying ways. For example, the population figure of 17,207,600 for French West Africa in 1951 is considered to be by some French/scientists to be subject to an error of possibly 25 percent either way in its segments. Some of them say the total population may actually be about 20,000,000.

The population of French<sup>Equatorial</sup> ~~West~~ Africa is given as about 4,500,000 and may be subject to the same errors.

In this paper the generalizations on policy and implementation apply to the Territories of French Equatorial Africa (FEA) as well as to those of French West Africa (FWA). In practice many of the economic and social features of the fast developing new order are financed and carried out in different manners in each of the 12 territories. Many of these

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these activities are subject to appropriations and interpretation by the territorial General Council. It will not be possible to take these differences into account in this paper. In general, however, it can be said that, considering French influence in FEA is more recent and that FEA is smaller and less populous than FWA, statistics and details for FWA apply to FEA in rough proportion to its size and population.

The French Trusteeship Territories of Togoland and the Cameroons are included in some features of French policy in Africa south of the Sahara, but by the nature of the Trusteeship arrangements, the inhabitants of these two territories are not eligible for participation in the affairs of the French Republic, such as by voting in the National elections

The French, in the Metropole and Africa, both Black and White, commonly refer to the parts of the French Union south of the Sahara, sometimes including Togo and the Cameroons, as "French Black Africa".

It must be emphasized that what is said about, or done in French Black Africa has no connection with anything concerning Morocco or French North Africa.

The French Officials for the two regions are trained in different schools, report to different Ministries in Paris and are not interchangeable between these two parts of Africa. As has often been said: "The Sahara is a greater barrier to the movement of peoples and ideas than is the Atlantic Ocean".

In magnitude and perspective French Black Africa (FWA, FEA, Cameroons and Togo) covers an area almost exactly the size of continental United States. Each of the twelve

territories

territories of FWA and FEA, except Dahomey and Senegal, is greater in size than the Gold Coast; each of them is larger than Liberia; and of the territories of FWA, each one, except Mauretania, is more populous than Liberia.

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